

THE STAGING OF BATTLE SCENES ON  
THE SHAKESPEAREAN STAGE

by

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THE STAGING OF BATTLE SCENES ON THE SHAKESPEAREAN STAGE  
AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

In the period from the opening of the first public theatre in London in 1576, until the death of Shakespeare in 1616, over one-third of all extant plays, and almost one-half of those written for Public playhouses, include battle scenes: scenes in which wars between large-scale forces are depicted. They are the product of a tradition of publicly performed mock battles which dates far back into the Medieval period, combined with the new subject matter of Elizabethan drama which dealt much with tales of adventure and chronicle history. They are also a product of the times, for they seem to reach a height shortly after the Armada, and to slowly fade from new plays during the reign of James I and after. Although there was, even from the early part of the period, an element among both playwrights and critics that did not look kindly upon them, they stayed popular on the public stage until the closing of the theatres.

Few of the almost 150 battle sequences available for study are explicit about stage activity, and the modern

scholar and theatre producer are often at a loss to know exactly what was intended. This thesis is an attempt to piece together all the information available from the plays and contemporary report, and to analyse the convention as a whole and in its component parts. A section is devoted to a close analysis of the oft-used terms such as alarums and excursions, and another to a study of the stage and its equipment. Although the focus is on battles and their presentation, a great part of the thesis is devoted to textual problems. Many ambiguous and incomplete sequences have been examined, and attempts made to clarify them. The plays of Shakespeare and Heywood, both of whom wrote many such scenes, have been treated at length.

Battles were usually preceded by a certain amount of spectacle. Armies marched on and off the stage in military manner, carrying a great variety of military equipment, and engaged in mock military maneuvers, often culminating in the confrontation of two armies. Such meetings often established a degree of foreshortening in which the forces, depicted as entrenched some distance apart, sent messengers out to confer and make threats before the fighting began. In addition, many speeches--both threats to the enemy and rallying speeches by leaders to their men--were made.

Some battles began with the clash of armies; many

others began off-stage. Most of the battle, in fact, took place off-stage. The sounds of the main fray issued from the tiring house; and the stage itself was used to depict incidents in the battle (duels, fights, clashes of large forces), and characters either resting or retreating from battle or awaiting word of the outcome. As characters entered, they showed in their manner, make-up, and costume, the effects and transitions in the fighting, and every means was used to make the battle seem as real as possible. Assaults and ship-board battles were, except in minor details, presented in much the same way. Although the highlights and climaxes of battles were usually shown on the stage, the fighting invariably ended off-stage, and usually culminated in the entrance of the victorious army.

Such scenes, involving large groups of men in often complex activity, suggest a directorial hand and a great deal of rehearsal. The development of the genre suggests that, for about twenty years, constant attempts were made to improve and increase the realistic appearance and depiction of battles, probably in an attempt to adjust them to the changing substance of drama, which made a perceptible shift around the turn of the century. As the plays became less and less romantic, battles as subject matter became less popular, the inherent awkwardnesses of their stage

appearance made them less desirable, and they slowly disappeared from new plays.

## PREFACE

The topic for this dissertation was suggested in separate, but almost simultaneous, conversations with Professor Allardyce Nicoll and Sir Barry Jackson. Professor Nicoll commented that the conventions of stage battles on the Elizabethan stage had never been fully investigated and that there was much to be learned that might be of value to the theatre historian. Sir Barry commented that the modern producer was often at a loss when it came to the extended battle-scenes called for in the plays of Shakespeare. Although initially projected to cover the period from the opening of the first public theatre in London to the death of Shakespeare, it fairly soon became apparent that such an arbitrary final date was not necessary, and the study was extended to cover the entire history of the Shakespearean stage from its beginnings until it was closed by the Puritans.

The basis for this study has been the list of plays in the Schoenbaum revision of Alfred Harbage's Annals of the English Drama. All of the extant plays listed as publicly performed between 1570 and 1616, and a great

number of earlier and later ones, have been examined. Those plays which include battles occur in a great variety of texts, and an attempt has been made to ascertain the provenance of each text, with an eye to the usefulness of the stage directions as found in them. Each has been considered on its individual merits, and the Appendix lists them with a survey of current bibliographical thought about each. As an adjunct to this study, it has been possible to make conjectures about many ambiguous and incomplete stage directions, and a major part of this thesis has been devoted to a discussion of them. In such a way it is hoped that the dissertation will be of use to the textual researcher as well as the historian of conventions.

For each play the earliest and/or most dependable text has been used, either in the original or in modern reprints such as the Tudor Facsimile Texts or the Malone Society Reprints. Unless there has been particular reason to preserve peculiarities, speech prefixes and stage directions have been regularized in italics, speeches have been regularized in roman type, and turned letters have been straightened. References to the plays are given as page numbers except in the case of editions (such as the Malone Reprints) that have numbered lines, and in the case of the

plays of Shakespeare where, for convenience, Act and Scene references have been used for quotations from the Folio. These latter references, and occasional brief quotations from the dialogue of Shakespeare's plays, are based on the numbering and text of G. B. Harrison's The Complete Works. For the sake of clarity terms such as hero, enemy, villain, opposing force, etc., have often been used so that a procession of character names out of context will not hamper the flow of the narrative. In a few cases the terms chosen do not properly identify the characters in terms of the over-all plot, but they best serve the immediate purposes: for example the Earl of Warwick is identified as a Yorkist when he makes a brief appearance during a York-Lancaster battle in II Henry VI.



## ABBREVIATIONS

A few regularly used titles have been abbreviated when they appear in footnotes, and other books have been listed with short titles. All works cited are listed with their complete titles in the List of References. For the reader's convenience, individual plays in the latter are listed by title rather than author.

E. S. -- Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage.

J. C. S. -- Bentley, The Jacobean and Caroline Stage.

Red Bull -- Reynolds, The Staging of Elizabethan Plays at the Red Bull Theatre.

Rival Traditions -- Harbage, Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions.

W. S. -- Chambers, William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of the staging of battle scenes in publicly performed plays in the Elizabethan theatre. Battle scene is a fairly common term in dramatic criticism, and although it usually appears in comments peripheral to the main line of discussion, there is general agreement about its meaning; it is a scene in a play wherein there is represented a warlike conflict between two opposing forces of some size. For the sake of this thesis emphasis should be placed on the size of the forces involved. Only when the opposing forces are thought of as being made up of an indeterminate number of men, when the playwright is involved in portraying a clash of many more men than he has actors to play them, is it thought of as a battle scene. All lesser forms of stage conflict--fights, tournaments, multiple duels--in which the participants are enumerated in the script and are portrayed as being involved in an activity confined only to the individuals we see, are

excluded from the term, although they may enter into the discussion when they appear in the course of a full scale battle. Wars in which thousands of soldiers clash in full scale fighting are the subject of this study. Although most such battles are fought on land, sea battles are included as well.

The presentation of battles as entertainment was not a development of the Elizabethan theatre. The tournament began in the thirteenth century as the presentation of a mock battle, and by the middle of the fifteenth century it had gradually developed into an elegant entertainment with the participants playing the roles of shepherds, wild men, and Popes, as well as warriors. Many of the performances were extensively mounted with scenery in the form of houses, mountains, and trees, and although the nobility were the core of the audience, the common folk were in strong attendance.<sup>1</sup> Although the tournament had declined in popularity by the time of the accession of Elizabeth, it had not passed from the scene in all forms, and the Children of Westminster presented a "Tournament and Barriers" at Court, in 1571.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Wickham, Early English Stages, I, 49-50.

<sup>2</sup>Feuillerat, Documents, 205.



At least one early folk pageant included a battle. In July, 1575, Queen Elizabeth visited Kenilworth and the townsfolk revived a traditional pageant for her entertainment. The Hock Tuesday Play, as it is now known, was originally part of the celebration festivities of Hock Monday and Tuesday, which date back to 1416-17. The pageant, which began about eight years later, "expressed in actionz and ryme" the defeat of the Danes by Ethelred in 1002, and appears to have been a sham battle between two parties representing the Danes and the English.<sup>3</sup> Other pageant battles were witnessed by the Queen in Warwick in 1572, and in Bristol in 1574; and one was presented in London as late as 1613.<sup>4</sup>

Two of the Robin Hood plays, probably written by a clerk or minstrel for village production,<sup>5</sup> include what seem to be full scale clashes of men: Robin Hood and the Knight, written sometime before 1475, presents a battle between Robin's men and the Sheriff's men, and there is a battle between the forces of Robin and forces of the Friar in Robin Hood and the Friar, printed in 1550,

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<sup>3</sup>Chambers, Medieval Stage, I, 154-5.

<sup>4</sup>Wickham, Early English Stages, II (pt. I), 224-5.

<sup>5</sup>Chambers, Medieval Stage, I, 178.

but undoubtedly written earlier.<sup>6</sup>

Chambers wrote of "the traditional motives of battle or siege" in Morality plays,<sup>7</sup> and noted that as early as the fourth century Prudentius had represented the conflict of spiritual forces for the soul of man as a siege in his Hamartigenia, and as a battle in his Psychomachia.<sup>8</sup> Seemingly in direct descent from Prudentius' battles of the Sins and Virtues is The Castle of Perseverance, a morality play of ca. 1425, in which Mankind and the Seven Graces are attacked and besieged by the Seven Deadly Sins and representatives of the Devil.<sup>9</sup>

Recent studies have more firmly than ever established the close connection between the Medieval and Elizabethan theatres. Wickham has called the Elizabethan theatre the apex of the Medieval tradition;<sup>10</sup> Hotson and Southern have tried, with varying degrees of success and acceptance, to develop the proposition that the stage of the Medieval theatre reached its full development in the

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<sup>6</sup>Manly, Specimens of English Drama, 279-85.

<sup>7</sup>English Literature at the Close of the Middle Ages, 61.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 50, which reads "Psychomathia."

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 56.

<sup>10</sup>Early English Stages, I, xxvii.

theatres built around 1600 in London and that the development was an unbroken one;<sup>11</sup> and Harbage has looked upon Elizabethan drama as having developed out of the more entertaining possibilities of Medieval Biblical and Moral plays, with the popular troupes applying these possibilities to a new subject matter shortly before the accession of Elizabeth.<sup>12</sup> The transition from a battle of the Seven Deadly Sins and the Seven Cardinal Virtues to a battle between the forces of Henry the Fifth and the French would have been an easy one.

Although the whims of fate have preserved few battle scenes written during the early part of Elizabeth's reign, we can assume that there was at least a moderate amount of such activity. The Gentlemen of the Inner Temple included a dumb show battle at the beginning of the fifth act of Gorboduc [ $D_4^R$ ], and Holinshed, in his Chronicles, described a show given before the Queen in 1579, in which a battle was performed [ $6I_5^V$ ]. Stephen Gosson, writing in 1579, speaks of "some of those players, that come to the scaffold . . . to profer skirmishe."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Hotson, Shakespeare's Wooden O; Southern, The Open Stage; passim.

<sup>12</sup>Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, 60-61.

<sup>13</sup>Chambers, E. S., IV, 203.

In Robert Wilson's Three Ladies of London, written in 1581, the Prologue, mentioning the many dramatic clichés he will not present, says, "We doo not shew of warlike sight, as sword and shield to shake" [A<sub>2</sub><sup>V</sup>]. Sidney's Apology For Poetry, written ca. 1583, cites the clash of two armies in pitched battle as one of the standard clichés of the theatre. Battlements are listed as required for fourteen of the twenty-eight plays mentioned in the Revels accounts between 1579 and 1585, and Chambers assumed that these must have been plays similar to Horestes, in which there is an assault scene with much on-stage fighting.<sup>14</sup>

It is only after the opening of the first permanent theatres in London in 1576 that the printing of publicly performed plays seems to have occurred in any appreciable amount. For this reason it is difficult to venture a guess about the comparative popularity of battle scenes before and after this time. As Harbage has written, the transition from Medieval to Elizabethan had already begun; the new subject matter--biography and adventure--was well established by the 1580's,<sup>15</sup> and would have been conducive

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<sup>14</sup>E. S., III, 45.

<sup>15</sup>Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, 64-5.

to an emphasis on plays with battles in them. Rossiter rather neatly puts the dividing line in drama from the Medieval to the Elizabethan somewhere about 1588.<sup>16</sup> It is just about this time that the first battle scenes appear as having been played in public London theatres. It would be tempting to consider the apparent explosion of such scenes as Elizabethan.

And explosion it seems, for between about 1586, when the first such scene appears, and 1600, over fifty percent of the surviving plays contain battle scenes. The percentage in new plays declines moderately after the turn of the century and takes a strong dip around the time of Shakespeare's retirement, but, in certain theatres at least, such scenes were still staple fare just before the closing of the theatres in 1642.

For the purposes of this study attention has been focused on the public theatre plays written between the time of the opening of the theatres and the death of Shakespeare. In this period there are 257 plays available for our study;<sup>17</sup> of these, 84 include battle scenes. Many of the 84 include more than one such scene--several, in fact, have as many as four--and the total for the forty

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<sup>16</sup>English Drama, 155.

<sup>17</sup>Harbage, Annals of English Drama, rev. Schoenbaum.

year period is 143. Although it is dangerous to think in percentages in a period where the contents of so many lost plays might conceivably alter figures considerably, we can say that one-third of the plays good enough and lucky enough to survive include battle scenes.

The popularity shown in these figures is reflected in other ways. The author of The English Wagner Book (1594) describes the tiring house wall and the platform before it as "the place where in the bloudlesse skirmishes are so often perfourmed,"<sup>18</sup> and the major feature of his imaginary play is a grand assault scene.

The interest in stage battles, at least in the provinces, may be deduced from the Quarto of the Battle Of Alcasar. Greg has shown, in a comparison of the Quarto with a surviving "plot" of the play, that the Quarto is a drastically cut version, probably for the provinces, with a diminished cast and the suppression of spectacular shows.<sup>19</sup> But a rather spectacular and lengthy battle scene remains in the cut-down version.

An occasional visitor from France, Saint-Amant, wrote

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<sup>18</sup>Quoted in Chambers, E. S., III, 72.

<sup>19</sup>Two Elizabethan Stage Abridgements, 15.

during his second trip to London that serious plays were remarkable for their murders, bloodshed, battles, and for the crowds they drew:

Tôt après le tambour sonne;  
Tout retentit de clameurs.  
L'un crie en saignant: Je meurs!

Et si l'on n'occit personne.  
Les feintes, les faux combats  
Font trembler et haut et bas

Le coeur du sexe imbécile,  
Qui laisse oeuvre et domicile  
Pour jouir de ces ébats.

L'une voyant l'escarmouche,  
En redoute le progrès;  
L'autre oyant de beaux regrets,  
Pleure s'essuye et se mouche;  
L'autre...  
Cabant vainqueur et vaincu,  
Gruge quelque friandise.<sup>20</sup>

When Vennar perpetrated his Englands Joy swindle, the first thing his broadside promised was to "induct by shaw and in Action, the ciuill warres of England . . . ." Then, for good measure, further on down the sheet he promised to "set forth the battle at Sea in 88. with Englands victory."<sup>21</sup>

Heywood identified The English Traveler as "A Strange Play" because it includes neither drum, trumpet, nor

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<sup>20</sup>Jusserand, Shakespeare In France, 128.

<sup>21</sup>Greg, Dramatic Documents, D<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>.

combat, and comments that these are in frequent use with the best poets.<sup>22</sup> As late as 1640 Shirley thought it necessary to write a special Prologue to The Doubtful Heir apologizing because the play lacked

what you most delight in,  
 Grave under[st]anders, here's no target fighting  
 Upon the Stage, all work for Cutlers barr'd. [A<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>]

The play, the Prologue explains, had been written for the Blackfriars theatre, and the apology was necessary because it was being performed at the Globe. Apparently, at the time of the closing of the theatres the pattern of public theatre and private theatre taste had not changed appreciably over the years, for when we separate the plays under study into those which can be definitely assigned to Public theatres and those which can be assigned to Private theatres,<sup>23</sup> we find that almost half [47%] of the Public theatre plays include battle scenes, and barely 8% of the Private theatre plays have them.

Examination of the repertories of the individual Public theatre companies shows that the King's-Chamberlain's company had a comparatively low percentage of plays with battle scenes; only 31% of the plays up to

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<sup>22</sup>Prologue, 6.

<sup>23</sup>Harbage, Rival Traditions, 343-50.



the beginning of their use of Blackfriars in about 1609. The Admiral's-Prince Henry's-Palgrave's group has 39%; and the Queen Anne's men, as is perhaps befitting their apparent reputation as rough and noisy, have such scenes in over half [55%] of the plays they presented. Plays attributable to other public companies (as Elizabeth's, Sussex', Pembroke's, Derby's, Oxford's, and Worcester's) show an over-all total of 53%.

Twenty-seven authors are represented in the 84 plays in the period, and probably a few others in the 18 anonymous plays. Greene and Peele included battles in most of the plays attributed to them, and more than half of Marlowe's few plays have battle scenes of some sort. Twelve of the seventeen plays generally attributed to Heywood include them, and about forty per-cent of Shakespeare's plays--fifteen of them--have at least one battle scene. Shakespeare, writing for a somewhat conservative company, seems to have written more such scenes than the over-all average and the average for his company--he, in fact, wrote 10 of the 17 such plays they had.

Although the type of play in demand during the period undoubtedly had some influence on the inclusion of stage battles, there was no real need for a dramatist to present a battle in a play: Richard II, All's Well, and Wars of

Cyrus are examples of plays in which battles vital to the plot are circumvented by the playwright. A half dozen playwrights of this period, in fact, have left no plays with battles in them: Beaumont, Daniel, Lyly, Middleton and Jonson seem to have written none (although Jonson chose to tease us, in the tradition of Bernard Shaw, by almost giving us one in Catiline). Jasper Mayne, in Ionsonvs Virbius (1638) commended Jonson for the omission:

Pitch't fields, as Red-Bull wars, still felt thy doome,  
Thou laidst no sieges to the Musique-Roome,<sup>24</sup>

and several authors took occasion in Prologues to draw attention to the exclusion of such scenes in their plays.

Most such Prologues are more than mere apology, however; they often reflect a strong feeling of dislike and scorn. At the opening of Warning For Fair Women, the character of Comedy berates the character of History by listing the tragic cliches, and includes among them

with that a little Rosen flasheth forth,  
Like smoke out of a Tabacco pipe, or a boyes squib:  
Then comes in two or three like to drouers,  
with taylers bodkins, stabbing one another,  
is not this trim? [A<sub>2</sub><sup>V</sup>-A<sub>3</sub><sup>R</sup>]

Grim The Collier, written about the same time, opens with a Chorus who shows a similar attitude:

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<sup>24</sup>Herford and Simpson, XI, 453.

Nor will I trouble you with Courts and Kings,  
Or drive a feined Battel out of breath; [G<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>]

The Prologue to The Birth of Hercules, an anonymous university play from the early 17th Century, tells us that the play is

No pestered deuise, w<sup>th</sup> Actores, crowded in  
Drumbes, Ensignes, phiphes, targetes & rusty swordes  
As farre from hence as deuilles or inkhorne wordes.  
[1. 21-3]

The author of the Two Merry Milkmaids had civic harmony in mind:

This day we entreat All that are hither come,  
To expect no noyse of Guns, Trumpets, nor Drum,  
Nor Sword and Targuet; but to heare Sence and Words,  
Fitting the Matter that the Scene affords.  
So that the Stage being reform'd, and free  
From the loud Clamors it was wont to bee,  
Turmoyl'd with Battailles; you I hope will cease  
Your dayly Tumults [A<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>];

the Prologue to Henry VIII had the preservation of a serious mood in mind:

Only they  
That come to hear a merry bawdy play,  
A noise of targets . . .  
Will be deceived; for, gentle hearers, know  
To rank our chosen truth with such a show  
As fool and fight is . . .  
Will leave us never an understanding friend;<sup>25</sup>

Thomas Nabbes, in Hannibal and Scipio, had the ladies in mind: he

prayer  
You will conceive his battailles done, . . .

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<sup>25</sup>Harrison, Works, 1506.

Nor need you Ladies feare the horrid sight:  
And the more horrid noise of target fight [ $A_3^V$ ];

Davenant, in The Unfortunate Lovers, had clarity of plot in mind when he ridiculed earlier audiences:

with what delight  
They would expect a jig, or Target fight,  
A furious tale of Troy, which they ne'r thought  
Was weakly written, so 'twere strongly fought  
[ $Q_1^V$ ];

and Ben Jonson, in the oft quoted Prologue to the 1616 revision of Every Man In His Humour, had Art in mind when he ridiculed poets who, with props and make-up,

Fight ouer Yorke, and Lancasters long iarres:

He rather prayes, you will be pleas'd to see<sup>26</sup>  
One such, to day, as other playes should be.

Jonson's Prologue, appearing as it does only in the carefully edited Folio of 1616, may have been intended for the reader. We do not know how much the common garden variety of plays were bought during this period as souvenirs of a performance and how much as a literary experience, and it is therefore difficult to know how much such purely "theatrical" scenes as battle scenes would have been of interest to the reader. They may have been a staple of the public stage, but printing houses did not often emphasize them on the title pages of published

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<sup>26</sup>Quoted in Chambers, E. S., IV, 248.

plays. I Henry IV (1598) promises the "battell at Shrewsburie"; The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth (1598) reads "Containing the Honou/rable Battell of Agincourt"; Henry V (1600) includes "With his battell fought at Agin Court"; and Captain Thomas Stukely (1605) promises the "valiant ending of his life at the Battaile of ALCAZAR." At the end of a long list of the highlights to be found in Richard III, in the Folio (1623), there is "with . . . the Battell at Bosworth Field", but none of the six preceding quartos of the play--although their title pages include equally extensive lists of highlights--bother to mention the battle. The Battle of Alcazar (1594) carries the implication of a battle scene in the title alone, as does Wounds of Civil War (1594). Titles did not always reflect content, however--there is no battle scene in The Wars of Cyrus.

A few other title pages, although they do not use the term battle, do suggest the presence of such scenes in the play:

Selimus (1594), ". . . how hee most vnnaturally/  
raised warres against his owne father."  
[Not in 1638 ed.]

The First Part of the Contention . . . (1594)  
promises "the Rebellion/ of Iacke Cade". There is  
no mention of Cade in the preliminaries to II Henry 6  
in the Folio (1623).

Lochrine (1595), ". . . discour/sing the warres of the Britaines, and Hunnes,/ with their discomfigure:/ The Britaines victorie with their Accidents, and the/ death of Albanact." [Not in 1664 ed.]

I and II Edward IV (1599), "CONTAINING . . . Likewise the besledging of London . . . and the valiant defence of the/ same." [Still used in 1626 ed.]

A Larum For London (1602), "With the ventrous actes and valo/rous deeds of the lame Soldier."

I Jeronimo (1605), "With the Warres of Portugall."

II If You Know Not Me (1606), ". . . And the famous Victorie of Queene Elizabeth, in the Yeare 1588." [Still used in 1633 ed.]

Four Prentices of London (1615), "With the Conquest of Ierusalem." [Not in 1632 ed.]

The Warres of Caesar and Pompey (1631, 2nd issue), "de/claring their Warres". [Alternate, but less common, title pages exist without this phrase.]

I Iron Age (1632), "Contayning . . . The siege of Troy."

The Stationer's Register entry for Edward III, (Dec. 1, 1595) reads ". . . Edward the Third and the Blacke Prince their warres with Kinge John", but the Quarto title page (1596) carries no mention of war.

On the title pages of Troublesome Reign of King John (1591) and True Tragedy of Richard the Third (1594) there are listed the highlights of each play--all the highlights that is, except the rather extensive battle scenes. Perhaps the appeal of a battle was not for the reader of the play, but only for the theatre-goer. Can it

be that even then there was a schism between those who looked upon the plays as theatrical works and those who looked upon them as poems for the Study?<sup>27</sup>

In general, battle scenes were popular on the public stage until the closing of the theatres, and although a few playwrights--for the most part men primarily associated with the Private theatres--expressed a dislike for them, such scenes were even deemed occasionally advertisable in printed plays as late as 1632. The regular member of the Public theatre audience could, in fact, assume that there would be a stage battle in almost every other play he saw. It may be possible to suggest a few reasons for the popularity.

The long history of Tournaments as public entertainment had developed a taste for displays of skill with various weapons. The Fortune and the Red Bull were often rented for exhibitions of fencing and prize-fights.<sup>28</sup> This might have increased the demand for such stuff in plays. Dekker's A Knight Conjuring has a paragraph which

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<sup>27</sup>For what it may be worth, it should be noted that Thomas Creede was the printer of Locrine, Contention, Famous Victories of Henry V, Henry V, and Selimus, which mention battle or war. He was, however, also the printer of True Tragedy of Richard Third, and several of the quartos of Richard III, which do not.

<sup>28</sup>Ordish, Early London Theatres, 48-9.

suggests that exhibitions of sword-play were given during intervals or before or after plays.<sup>29</sup> Interest in martial displays, sword-play, and mock battles almost brought into existence a 12,000 seat amphitheatre in the early 1620's,<sup>30</sup> which would have, according to the prospectus and correspondence dealing with financing, presented all sorts of spectacles, but would have emphasized mock-battles--land and sea variety--and martial display.

Although England had fought no major pitched land battle since the Battle of Pinkie in 1547,<sup>31</sup> the English were far from removed from European military activity. It can be no coincidence that the sudden burst of battle scenes into the theatre came at about the same time as the Armada, and before and after the Armada there were numerous expeditions of small English forces onto the Continent and Ireland. The latter part of Elizabeth's reign was a period of war for England,<sup>32</sup> and war was reflected not only in the drama, but in ballads, verse, and books on the "Art of War", all of which appeared in

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<sup>29</sup>L. B. Wright, Stage Duelling," 266.

<sup>30</sup>Hotson, "Projected Amphitheatre," 24-35.

<sup>31</sup>Oman, 368.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 370-73.



great number.<sup>33</sup> The acquired taste does not seem to have died out too rapidly during the comparatively peaceful reign of James.

Whatever the reasons for the popularity of battles in the theatre, few other types of scene appear so often. Such a staple of 16th and early 17th Century theatre is deserving of more than the heretofore superficial comment it has received. Recent criticism has either centered itself on poetic effect, with an attendant embarrassment at any merely physical activity on the stage; or has been engaged in a reconstruction of the theatres of the day and has tended to treat all activity merely as evidence for doors, balconies and traps. Harbage suggested that those who consider battle scenes the desiderata of certain types of plays are mistaken,<sup>34</sup> but the fact is that we know very little about the variety of such scenes and their characteristics, and only when we understand the ways in which these scenes were presented will we be able to venture opinion as to the way the plays in which they occur were conceived.

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<sup>33</sup>Langsam, Martial Books, 199-203; Cockle, Bibliography, passim.

<sup>34</sup>Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, 260.

Perhaps a better understanding of the role of these scenes and the manner of their presentation can also cast light on the vexing question of "Conventionalism" in the Elizabethan theatre. If it could be shown whether these scenes were realistically or conventionally treated, both in presentation and in the way they were introduced into the script, the key to much of the problem might be in our hands. There is much material here, and it is hoped that the extensive treatment of it may be of value to scholars engaged in the question.

There is little doubt that the theatrical Producer would welcome more information. His greatest problem is "the presentation of the endless 'alarms, excursions and battles' . . . the bigger the stage, the more unwieldy the problem," wrote Sir Barry Jackson shortly after his Birmingham Repertory Theatre had presented the three Henry The Sixth plays.<sup>35</sup> As Margaret Webster put it, "The brief indication 'Alarums and Excursions' serves for an entire sequence of marchings and counter-marchings, trumpets and drums, victories and defeats. 'Alarums and Excursions' says Shakespeare; and we are left with our imagination and a rather frightening margin for oppor-

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<sup>35</sup>"On Producing Henry VI," 52.

tunity and error."<sup>36</sup> Speaking as a producer, and advising other producers, G. Wilson Knight emphasized his feeling that battle scenes are as important in Elizabethan plays as wars are in modern plays and films, because they are the surface symptoms of what is imbedded deep in the play, the "significant action."<sup>37</sup>

Bernard Beckerman, reviewing a recent production at Stratford, Connecticut, summed up a current attitude:

Towards the end of Richard III occurs one of those series of battle scenes which oppress directors and usually bore audiences. One always has to do something with them. In recent years flag waving has been much in fashion. Supernumeraries wave flags in great swirls; they dash across the stage with pennants streaming; they brandish dozens of yards of drapery to simulate the violence and turbulence of battle. This was the means [used at Stratford] to express the downfall of Richard. Granted, it was a means that got him through the battles. But it did little else to illuminate the play. It was design without purpose. More than that, it was decoration, in its pejorative sense, without design.<sup>38</sup>

In most cases, battle scenes come near, or are, the climax of the play. A producer has to know much about the

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<sup>36</sup>Shakespeare Without Tears, 43.

<sup>37</sup>Principles of Shakespearean Production, 30-1, 78.

<sup>38</sup>Beckerman, "The 1964 Season at Stratford, Connecticut," 400.

playing of such a scene in order to get close to the intent and spirit of the author. And yet there is often the sketchiest of stage directions and textual reference on which to rely for help. With a broad knowledge of the manner in which battles were performed in Shakespeare's day, he would be better equipped to eke out the few hints in the particular play on which he is working.

Although few producers appear to be at all influenced by current scholarly interest in conventionalism, there is a strong theatrical tradition of conventionalized battle scenes that influences even producers otherwise dedicated to stark realism. Nevertheless, current treatment runs the gamut from almost ballet-like conventionalism to the sometimes frightening realism presented on the stage at Stratford, Ontario. In the Birmingham Repertory Henry VI plays, Douglas Seale tried to find a middle ground by mixing the two extremes--a middle ground that I, for one, found a bit unsteady.

This thesis, then, hopes to be of assistance to the scholar and the producer. It will cover only the "how" of battle. It will not attempt to treat each battle as an integral part of the script, nor will it deal with any social, religious, or artistic ideas that may be found in such scenes. This is not an attempt to discover the

Elizabethan attitude toward such scenes, nor even an attempt to sift the well written ones from the poorly written ones; it is an attempt to find out how the scenes were performed by professional players in public theatres.

A number of authors writing for almost a dozen companies over a period of forty years might quite be expected to have produced a wide variety of battle scenes. This work will attempt to separate the dominant approaches and to discover if there is any strong difference to be discovered in different periods or authors or theatres. Many modern critics and scholars use battle scenes as a generic term, as though all such scenes had certain common characteristics; this thesis will examine the possibility that there is an ideal battle scene and how such a scene, or scenes, is accurately reflected in current studies.

The study will deal first with the "preliminaries": the movements, equipage, and action that immediately precedes battle. Following this it will examine the battle itself, in all its varying--to the point of opposite extremes--manifestations, with an extended examination of the oft quoted and oft mis-used terms "alarums and excursion." To conclude the general survey there will be a very brief look at the means for ending battles. Assaults

on towns, a popular form of battle with many distinct features of its own, will benefit from separate examination. Finally, there will be an attempt to relate the convention of battle scenes to the development of the Elisabethan-Jacobean Theatre. As each of the different conventions found in battle scenes is touched upon, an attempt will be made to examine many ambiguous and incomplete places in the printed texts, and to clarify them whenever possible.

For the purposes of this study the author has chosen to view the plays under examination as scripts for the theatre or as records of performance. He has had a moderate amount of theatrical experience, both as performer and producer, and will try to bring this to bear when the occasion demands it.

## CHAPTER TWO

### PRELIMINARIES TO BATTLE

Only governments can afford to wage full scale battles, and they usually go into debt in the process: theatrical producers have to settle for less. Even the motion picture producer, with comparatively unlimited resources at hand, has to resort to a great amount of trickery to give the impression of great masses of men in battle. War and Peace made judicious use of mountains to hide portions of armies that did not exist, Paths of Glory filled the battlefield with so much smoke that it was impossible to tell if there were millions or dozens advancing over the trench tops, and Lillian Ross, in her book, Picture, describes the wonderfully ingenious methods John Huston used in Red Badge of Courage to make a few dozen men appear to be two large armies in pitched battle.

But the motion picture can be made a scene at a time, and large armies can be pieced together in the cutting room from shots of the same men marching down a road a dozen

different times in different clothes. The stage is limited by a tiny platform, a very limited number of actors, and an invariably limited budget. It would appear to be foolhardy in the extreme to attempt the presentation of a battle under such circumstances. Yet at least 143 times in the period from 1578 to 1616 such scenes were introduced into plays that were, most of them, publicly performed in London.

In very few instances did playwrights take the easy way out. In an age when symbolism of all kinds was prevalent in public performances, the inclusion of a battle in the plot of a play could have been easily dealt with in completely symbolic fashion. An author could have, for instance, followed the lead of the early Gorboduc by presenting a brief march across the stage followed by a narrator or an explanation worked into the script which would quickly explain that a battle was thereby signified:

The order and signifcation of the dome  
shews before the fifthe Acte.

First the Drommes and Fluites, beganne to  
sound, duryng which there came foorth  
vpon the stage a companie of Hargubusiers  
and of Armed men all in order of Battaile.  
These after their peeces discharged, and  
that the Armed men had three tymes marched  
about the Stage, departed, and then the  
Drommes and fluits did cease. Hereby was



signified tumults, rebellions Armes and ciuyll warres to folowe.<sup>1</sup>

He could then quickly move on to a more easily handled part of the story.

In at least 143 instances, however, a great assortment of authors writing for over a dozen different companies elected to come to grips with the problem of representing a war, performed by actors in a theatre, before an audience. In spite of the derogatory comments of Sidney or the Chorus in Warning For Fair Women we can assume that the majority of the audience found little wrong with such scenes--if the general effect of such a scene had been incongruous and had therefore interfered with the mood of the play (and aside from a few scenes-within-battles such as the Falstaff-Coleville one in II Henry IV, there are few comic battles), they would not have been written. At least not quite so often.

### Apologies for Stage Battles

Much has been made of "apologies" by playwrights for the inadequacies of the stage for battles. There are really very few, and close examination shows that even these are not as apologetic as they might be. After a

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<sup>1</sup>Corboduc, D<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>.

battle in Stukely has been progressing for quite some time with much on-stage activity, the Chorus comes forth and says

Your gentle favour must we needs entreat,  
 For rude presenting such a royall fight,  
 Whhich [sic] more imagination must supply:  
 Then all our vtmost strength can reach vnto.  
[L<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>]

and then quickly sums up the last few months of the war. This is as much an excuse for brevity as for clumsiness. In Edmond Ironside, the Chorus tells us that he would like us to "vnderstand the truth / and see the battailes Acted on the stage / But that theire length wilbe to tedious" [969-71], and then goes on to present a very long dumb-show battle. He does not suggest any reason but the saving of time for so doing.

The most cited of the so-called apologies is in the Chorus' speech in Henry V [IV, Prologue]. Many critics with a seeming distaste for rough and tumble display<sup>2</sup> interpret the comments about a "brawl ridiculous" [IV, Prologue, 51] as showing Shakespeare's dissatisfaction with battle scenes and with the inadequacies of his

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<sup>2</sup>Bradbrook wrote of the "plight" of the dramatist in being required to include fighting [Themes and Conventions, 35], and Harbage thought battles a "mistaken" desiderata for history plays [Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, 260].

facilities for presenting them. If he was dissatisfied with such scenes, it did not, however, prevent him from including them in later plays.

Warren D. Smith has suggested that the Chorus was added to the play for a production at Court, where the staging facilities may not have been quite what they were at the Globe and where the audience may have been more critical.<sup>3</sup> R. A. Law, in a fairly convincing answer, showed that the Chorus was part of the original play. He further pointed out that the Chorus is not really apologizing for the inadequacy of the theatre, but rather exalting the theme of the play as impossible for any adequate representation.<sup>4</sup> As Reynolds wrote, comments about the inadequacy of the stage for the representation of battles, as well as spectacles of all kinds, would be necessary and applicable in any theatre at any time in history, for no kind of theatrical performance, however much is attempted, can be "but shadows."<sup>5</sup>

As Sir Barry Jackson has pointed out, "the line between the risible and the serious is of such infinitesimal

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<sup>3</sup>"Henry V Choruses," 57.

<sup>4</sup>"Choruses in Henry The Fifth," 13.

<sup>5</sup>Red Bull, 38-9.

breadth that the reaction of the audience can never be foretold."<sup>6</sup> When an audience is tense from the piling up of suspense, it bursts into laughter at the slightest provocation. The Battle of Agincourt is no place for laughter. It would have been foolhardy of Shakespeare to draw attention to an inadequate performance just a few moments before it was presented. Rather than an apology, even "in form only,"<sup>7</sup> Chorus' words are in the realm of tour-de-force writing, much the same as is Cleopatra's speech about being "boyed" on the stage in Antony & Cleopatra [V. ii. 220]. If the audience notices the game Shakespeare is playing the whole scene is ruined by laughter at the worst possible time, but he seemed to delight in the knowledge that he could "get away with it."<sup>8</sup>

There is only one other instance of an "apology" for the inadequacies of the moment in producing a battle, and it really appears in a different context. In Travels of the Three English Brothers, Sir Anthony wishes to show

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<sup>6</sup>Shakespeare Survey, VI, 52.

<sup>7</sup>Hodges, Shakespeare and the Players, 80.

<sup>8</sup>Again, from a more theatrically functional point of view, the speech may have a dramatic purpose as well: to draw attention to the supposed weaknesses of an important scene can, if it is played well, make it seem even better. See below, p. 180.

the Sophy the way in which Christian battles are fought, and he has his men perform one. He precedes the performance with an apology to the Sophy for the mere shadow his small retinue will be able to present [ $A_3^V$ ]. Later on in the play, when the plot calls for a real battle to be shown, there is no apology.

In I Fair Maid of the West there is an extended shipboard battle, at the end of which the Chorus enters to apologize for the lame ability of the stage to represent a journey at sea. He gives not the slightest excuse for the battle itself. [319]

### First Signs of Battle

Although few, if any, battle scenes begin with apologies, few begin unannounced. Only three plays open with battles in progress. Each of these shows the battle as almost finished, and we see only a latter fragment of it.<sup>9</sup> In most other cases the battle occurs after the play has been in progress some time, and after the playwright has had opportunity to build up to the conflict.

### Marching Armies

Although an approaching conflict is usually announced

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<sup>9</sup>Lovesick King, Shoemaker a Gentleman, Antonio and Mellida.

in the dialogue in some way, it is very rare for a battle to begin without some visual military activity beforehand. The most common practice is for one or both armies to march on to the stage, and by its manner and appearance to set the scene for the ensuing battle.

Marching armies never enter without a leader or group of leaders: "Enter Prince Iohn and his armie,"<sup>10</sup> "Enter Fausta and Iphiginia with their armie,"<sup>11</sup> "Enter . . . Huldrick and Rodrick, Kings of the Goths and Vandalls, with their Army,"<sup>12</sup> are stage directions that exemplify general practice. Stage directions do not, however, often use the term "army;" much more common is "soldiers." Over fifty of the plays in this study normally use it as the term for military groups, and stage directions range from "Enter Humber and his souldiers,"<sup>13</sup> and "Enter the Queene, Oxford, Souldiers,"<sup>14</sup> to "Enter . . . Caesar, Lepidus, Anthony, Enobarbus, Mecnas, Agrippa, Menas with Souldiers Marching."<sup>15</sup> In many of

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<sup>10</sup>II Henry IV, Quarto, G<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>11</sup>Alphonsus of Aragon, 1678.

<sup>12</sup>Shoemaker a Gentleman, F<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>13</sup>Lochrine, 802.

<sup>14</sup>II Robin Hood, G<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>15</sup>Ant. and Cleo., II. vi.

the plays in which other terms are used in some stage directions, "soldiers" is used as well.

A great variety of terms is, in fact, used for what in each case amounts to the same thing--a group of men that represents an army or part of one. "Army" appears often in stage directions in Antony and Cleopatra, and in about a dozen other plays. In II Iron Age, a stage direction for an entrance gives only the name of the major characters, but after they begin to fight, a stage direction speaks of "the two armies" [391]. Often the term used to identify a military group reflects the circumstances of the plot and probably reflects the mind of the author at work rather than an identification designed for theatrical differentiation. "Train," sometimes used for the attendants in a procession (e.g. Ed. IV), is also used in a half dozen pre-1600 plays to mean a military group.<sup>16</sup> Other terms used are: "powers," in Timon, I and III Henry VI, King John, Weakest Goeth and the "Plot" of 7 Deadly Sins; "others," in David and Beth., Ant. and Cleo., Brazen Age, and Iron Age; "company," in Ed. III, Devil's Charter, and Kn. Burning Pest.; "&c" in I and II Iron Age and Troilus and Cressida; the "rest" in

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<sup>16</sup>David and Bethsabe, II Tamburlaine, Battle of Alcazar, Ed. I, Mass. At Paris, and Henry V.

III Henry VI, Mass. At Paris, and Troilus and Cressida; "Jannisaries" in Selimus and Sol. and Perseda; "Lords" in Famous Vict. and I Tamburlaine; "common Soldiers," in Val. Welshman; "attendants" in Jeronimo; "followers," in Lochrine; "Myrmidons" in Troilus and Cress. "Romans" in Rape of Luc.; "Pikes and Targeters," in Rape of Luc.; "Captains," in Lovesick King; "troops" in Ed. IV; "men" in Ed. IV and Oldcastle; "host," in James IV; "battles," in James IV; "infinite numbers," in II Henry VI; and "force" in Birth of Merlin. In plays with ship-board battles the groups are identified as mariners and sailors.

For the purposes of this thesis, the term "army" or "soldiers" is used for all such groups, except in instances where it seems fairly clear that the stage direction uses a term to designate a specific part of the army; for example in the cases of Myrmidons, and Pikes and Targeters.

The impression of an army in the field was established in three ways--by the manner in which the actors came on to the stage, the equipment they carried, and the sound-effects that preceded and accompanied them.

It is most likely that the great majority of "armies" entered through one of the tiring house doors, even when the stage direction does not specifically state "at one



door." Even Hotson, who envisaged most entrances and exits as occurring through trap doors at the sides of the platform, suggested that large props, and crowds and armies entered through the doors that, although he no longer permitted them to be the doors to the tiring house, were in the same place as in the "Swan" drawing.<sup>17</sup> Chambers<sup>18</sup> and Nicoll<sup>19</sup> believed that at least occasionally armies made entries from the yard, and Hodges<sup>20</sup> suggested that the yard may have occasionally been used for "stunt value." These suggestions are still rather tenuous conjectures, however. Although such yard entrances would have had a spectacular effect, they could not have been managed without careful preparation in the writing of the script--actors would have had to be free to get to the more-distant-than-usual entry place. With at least moderate preparation and advance notice necessary for such an entry, it seems unusual that no hints of such activity appear in any stage directions except in the somewhat ambiguous phrase "pass over the stage" that Nicoll

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<sup>17</sup>Wooden O, 98.

<sup>18</sup>E. S., III, 101, 107.

<sup>19</sup>"Passing Over The Stage," passim.

<sup>20</sup>"Unworthy Scaffold," 94.

suggested means a yard entry. In any case the phrase appears in only a tiny handful of army entrances, all of them in plays by Shakespeare from about the same period--King Lear (V. ii), Cymbeline (V. ii), and Antony and Cleopatra (III. x).<sup>21</sup>

Stage directions occasionally include the terms "march" or "marching" in connection with entering soldiers.<sup>22</sup> Although the word "march," appearing as it often does in conjunction with the appearance of a drum, may refer to a musical figure played on a drum, it would have undoubtedly applied to the manner in which the actors walked as well. The calls for "march within" that precede some army entrances<sup>23</sup> would, of course, influence the actors in the same way.

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<sup>21</sup>The Monument scene in Antony and Cleopatra, IV. v., has been suggested by one writer as calling for a yard entry: see Saunders, "Vaulting the Rails," 81. The only other incident of this phrase appearing in connection with a stage army is in Valiant Welshman, I.<sup>v</sup>, in a scene in which an army marches on to the stage and arranges itself in rows, after which several other characters "pass over."

<sup>22</sup>Alph. Aragon, 284; Ed. IV, 8; Devil's Charter, 5; Four Prentices, 175, et passim; Lust's Dom., E<sub>5</sub><sup>r</sup>; Macbeth, passim; Ant. and Cleo., passim.

<sup>23</sup>II If You Know Not Me, 342; Ed. Ironside, 956; Bonduca, 644-5; Birth of Merlin, C<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>. See also discussion of Sound Effects, below, p. 230.

It would have been difficult for the actors to re-create actual military marching formations. These generally called for a rank of from seven to fifteen men<sup>24</sup> and a file of ten or more:<sup>25</sup> the former would have been impossible to achieve through any stage door generally conjectured, and the latter would have necessitated more performers than were probably available. The smallest rank used by Elizabeth's army was three, and this only for small groups of Arquebusiers. It may be, however, that this was a formation that was adapted for stage soldiers. A rank of only two was apparently associated with the movement of prison inmates: when Prince Hal and Peto enter "marching,"<sup>26</sup> Falstaff asks ". . . must we all march?" and Bardolph answers "Yea, two, and two, Newgate fashion."

Continental armies, as well as Elizabeth's, rarely marched in a point to point line, especially when anywhere near the enemy. One of the most common marching patterns, or "rays," was the Bissa, which called for the army to progress in a snaking manner. This kept a

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<sup>24</sup>Gerrard, Arte of Warre, N<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>25</sup>Shakespeare's England, I, 114.

<sup>26</sup>I Henry IV, Quarto, G<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>.

large number of men fronting the enemy at all times.<sup>27</sup> The Bissa, and other marching orders such as the Cara-guolo may be reflected in the phrase "march about the stage" which appears often, and which Bradbrook called the commonest of spectacles.<sup>28</sup>

With the exception of a stage direction in Lust's Dominion, that reads "Enter . . . souldiers, marching bravely " [E<sub>5</sub><sup>r</sup>], and one in Timon (a play with no battle scene) that reads "in warlike manner" [IV. iii.], no directions suggest the demeanor of the actors upon entry.<sup>29</sup> It is to be imagined that if any special behavior was entailed in the representation of a marching soldier, it was common knowledge. Perhaps the "pompous fashion" requested by the Wife in Knight of the Burning Pestle [I<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>] was standard marching procedure for actors, or perhaps it was merely the Wife's own idea. The entry of Falconbridge and his troops, "marching as being at Mile end." (Ed. IV, 25) might conceivably have suggested an exposition of drill-marching--Mile End was a famous

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<sup>27</sup>Gerrard, S<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>28</sup>Themes and Conventions, 9. For further discussion of this point see the section on the Stand, below, p. 136.

<sup>29</sup>See comment on "a scuruy march" in Hoffman, below, p. 43.

drill ground, and had been a favorite source of entertainment for Londoners since the time of Henry VIII<sup>30</sup>-- but it is most probably merely a bit of "literary" interpretation on the part of the author, for the plot calls for the troops to have retired to Mile End at that point.

### Properties

The great majority of entering soldiers are accompanied by either "Drum and Colors" or "Drum" alone. A few entries call for "Trumpet," usually in conjunction with "drum," and a very few call for only "colors." These pieces of equipment were basic theatrical stock, and were often mentioned in connection with battles on the stage and with the theatre in general.

In Gosson's School of Abuse, for example, an apologist for Homer is likened "to some of those players that come to the scaffold with drum and trumpet to profer skirmishe."<sup>31</sup> In 1610, Lord Eure's men were referred to as "the plaiers with theire apparell drumm & trumpettes

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<sup>30</sup>Shakespeare's England, 114; see also II Henry IV, 111. 11. 301, and All's Well, IV. 111. 303.

<sup>31</sup>Quoted in Chambers, E. S., IV, 203.

cartes & waggens" when they stayed at Stourbridge.<sup>32</sup> In Warning for Fair Women, the character of Hystorie enters "with Drum and Ensigne" [A<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>] and is ridiculed for his association with stage battles. The Prologue to Birth of Hercules promises that his play is "No pestered deuice, w<sup>th</sup> Actores, crowded in / Drummes, Ensignes, phiphes, targetes & rusty swordes" [21-2], and the Prologue to The English Traveler opens with: "A Strange Play you are like to haue, for know, / We vse no Drum, nor Trumpet . . . / No Combate" [6]. When the Wife, in Knight of the Burning Pestle, sends Rafe to play a military scene she instructs him to "call all the youthes together in battle-ray, with drums, and guns and flags, and march." [I<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>]

### Drum

The item most commonly associated with war was the drum. Gascoigne refers to lovers of war as those that "delight to follow drummes,"<sup>33</sup> and most manuals and books about war give the drum prominent and lengthy discussion. Drummers themselves were expected to be accomplished linguists and to be generally clever and shrewd--one of their chief duties was to carry messages to the enemy.

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<sup>32</sup>P. R. O., Sta. Cha. 8/307/14.

<sup>33</sup>Posies, I<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>.

They were, in fact, put on a par with physicians in their importance.<sup>34</sup> The real-life qualities of the drummer were not reflected in any of the plays of the period however; no dialogue is ever assigned to drummers, nor do any of the many 'messengers' carry drums. The closest a stage drummer ever gets to fulfilling the function of his real-life counterpart is to give signal to the enemy for a parley that will be held by the leaders of the armies.

The Elizabethan military drum was quite large.<sup>35</sup> It was usually about two feet in diameter, and two-and-a-half to three feet high,<sup>36</sup> and was loud enough to be heard over the noise of battle. It was, in fact, more bulky than a modern bass drum, and would be all that an actor could manage. Greg's thought that one actor might have handled both drum and standard or ensign would have been out of the question;<sup>37</sup> even if the standard were

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<sup>34</sup>Gascoigne, Ibid., K<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>; Gerrard, Arte of Warre, H<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>35</sup>It should not be confused with the Tabor--a small drum about the size of a modern dance band snare drum, popularly associated with Tarlton in the late 1500's--see the woodcut, title page, Tarlton's Jests, 1611, and Chambers, E. S., II, 344.

<sup>36</sup>Illustrated in Cowling, Music on the Shakespearian Stage, 44, and Shakespeare's England, 114.

<sup>37</sup>Dramatic Documents, II, 120.

strapped to him in some way he would not have been able to get through the entrance door and play the drum at the same time.

It may be that the drum did not always come on to the stage with the soldiers, but sometimes remained in the tiring house. In several plays a drum is heard by characters on the stage and referred to in conjunction with the sound of an approaching army--in some of these instances there is even a stage direction for a "drum" or "march" that precedes the entry--but the actual stage direction for the entrance does not include a drum.<sup>38</sup> Several possibilities arise here. If it was only heard, and did not appear on the stage, one drum could have been made to serve for the marching of several armies.<sup>39</sup> It is quite possible, of course, that the absence of a drum from a stage direction reflects no more than a slip of

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<sup>38</sup>Ed. Ironside, 955, 1560; Val. Welshman, B<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>, E<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>; I Iron Age, 292-4; Famous Vict., F<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>; Alph. Aragón, 1558--all of which mention drums in stage directions and dialogue: I Tamburlaine, 24, 30; II Robin Hood, G<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>--in which a drum is called for in dialogue, but in which an off-stage drum would suffice.

<sup>39</sup>The Admiral's Men who played the above mentioned scene in Tamburlaine and the Red Bull Company who played I Iron Age, must have had more than one drum in their prop-rooms however, because other plays in their repertoire call for two or more on stage at once.



the mind on the part of the author, and that in production, there was a drum in the procession. One other possibility exists; that such a treatment may have been part of an attempt to create the effect of a large mass of men.<sup>40</sup>

Although Naylor was incorrect in his assumption that all stage marches were played on the drum alone,<sup>41</sup> it is true that most of them were. When the term "march" appears without qualification in a stage direction, there is almost always a drum mentioned in the dialogue or a nearby direction. At one point in Bonduca the MS derived from the foul papers reads "March w<sup>th</sup> in" and the same point in the prompt-copy-derived Folio reads "Drum . . . within." There may have been some attempt to play different marches for different armies or companies, but aside from one English march, one French march, and one Danish march,<sup>42</sup> no notation for differentiation appears in stage directions.<sup>43</sup> The stage direction "a scuruy march"

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<sup>40</sup>See below, p. 52.

<sup>41</sup>Shakespeare and Music, 168-9.

<sup>42</sup>All in Shakespeare: the first two in I Henry VI, III. iii. in what appear to be authorial instructions--"Here sound an English March"--and the latter in Hamlet, III.ii. in a court procession. Cf. Naylor, Shakespeare and Music, 166.

<sup>43</sup>"Dead Marches" are often played in the aftermath of battle, but never before, and the occasional stage direction for a "still march" means a silent or drumless march.

in Hoffman [1125]<sup>44</sup> might possibly refer to the sound of a march played on a drum or other instrument, but inasmuch as it is preceded by a description of the army as "a rabble of poore souldiers," it was more likely meant to describe the manner in which the actors were to walk.

### Ensign

Of much less functional military importance, but of far greater symbolic importance, were the "colors." There seems to have been no difference in the terms "Ensign" and "Standard;" even the OED defines Ensign as "a military standard." Ensign was used by Sir Roger Williams to mean a group of men attached to a particular standard, i.e., "an ensign of 300,"<sup>45</sup> but it does not appear to have ever been used in this sense in the theatre. There is some suggestion that standard may have properly been more applicable to carved or sculpted figures carried on poles, such as the one carried by the central figure in the Peacham drawing of Titus Andronicus,<sup>46</sup> but playwrights

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<sup>44</sup>Misquoted in Harbage, Rival Traditions, 269, as "a scurvy march is played."

<sup>45</sup>Brief Discourse of War, D<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>46</sup>Reproduced in e.g. Nicoll, Development of the Theatre, 135.

seem to have been unaware of the distinction. "Colors" and "Banner" were more popular terms, and on occasion, even the prosaic "flags" was used. The latter is found only in dialogue, however, never in stage directions.

Ensigns served militarily as signs of identification. Each Captain of a company in an English army had an identifying ensign that was carried in the midst of his company on a pole about ten feet high. The flags for foot-companies were four to five feet high and from six to ten feet long. Smaller, tapering banners, two to three feet high and five to six feet long (often carried on a lance) were carried by companies of horse.<sup>47</sup> The General of the Army was identified by his own banner. The Ensign, flanked by a drum, was always protected by being placed in the center of the company, both when marching and in battle formation. Popular modern illustrations of Elizabethan stage armies on the march, with drum and/or colors at the fore,<sup>48</sup> have no basis in the plays themselves, and apparently none whatsoever in the practice of any European forces.<sup>49</sup> The stage direction "Enter

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<sup>47</sup>Derricke, Image of Ireland, end sheet.

<sup>48</sup>Even Hodges, Globe Restored, 59.

<sup>49</sup>Gerrard, Art of Warre, M<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup> and End papers; Machiavelli, Art of War, 92 and 234-237; Oman, History of the Art of War, 379.

marching after drummes & trumpets," in Devil's Charter [5], probably refers to an entrance after the sound of drums and trumpets is heard, and in any case, this entrance is not an ordinary military march, but a procession of the king and his forces through his own country.

Although drums alone are called for in many entrances, there are only three plays in which colors are present without drums.<sup>50</sup> It is impossible to know if "colors" was at times singular and at times plural, but only one stage direction, in Edward III [H<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>], calls for "ensignes." There are quite a few instances, of course, when two ensigns--one for each of two opposing armies--are called for to be on the stage at the same time.

This leads to the question of how many banners a company may have had in its stock. It is difficult to imagine a company troubling to re-paint or re-make banners to represent each of the many armies and military companies that might cross the stage in the course of a few weeks' repertory playing, and it is equally difficult to think that they might have gone to the expense of keeping a large stock of assorted "colors."

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<sup>50</sup>Val. Welshman, Ed. III, Wounds Civ. War.

Occasionally the design on a shield or target is described in a stage direction,<sup>51</sup> but there are very few ensigns so treated: there are calls for "English" and "Spanish" "colors" in If You Know Not Me, "Christian" and "Pagan" "colors" in Four Prentices, and for a Roman Eagle in Shoemaker a Gent. In all other instances they are merely "colors" or "ensigns." Ensigns appear in the Revel's accounts [155] only once, for a "Triumph," and only one "anshente" is found in Henslowe's papers--in the Malone "inventories."<sup>52</sup> There are no sequences in which the identity of an army or company is dependent on the "colors," so it may quite be that theatrical companies made no attempt to keep more than a few--perhaps contrasting in color--banners that were made to do for all occasions.

### Trumpets

The Trumpeter is not included in Barnaby Rich's list of army personnel<sup>53</sup>--a list that places the Ensign between the Lieutenant and the Sergeant, and the Drums just below the Sergeant and before the Surgeon. In general, military books devote little space to the trumpet.

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<sup>51</sup>See below, p. 66.

<sup>52</sup>Foakes and Rickert, Henslowe's Diary, 318.

<sup>53</sup>Pathway to Military Practice, D<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>-G<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>.

It is associated primarily with groups of horsemen: Machiavelli, Roger Williams, and Rich all included trumpets among the cavalry in their various battle and marching diagrams. The woodcut showing an English army on the march, in Derricke's Image of Ireland, shows two trumpeters, mounted, amidst the horsemen. The sound of a drum was too similar to the thunder of horse's hoofs to be useful as a signaling device among mounted men, and therefore the sharper trumpet was used. Although the trumpet and cornet were actually quite different instruments (the latter was a long, wooden, slightly curved instrument with finger stops; the former was much like the modern bugle), troops of cavalry were often spoken of as "cornets,"<sup>54</sup> probably because the military use of trumpets had grown out of the use of cornets in some Continental armies. They were, in fact, still used by the Spanish.<sup>55</sup> Machiavelli usually placed a trumpet next to the General in his diagrams<sup>56</sup> and Rich wrote that edicts of the General were proclaimed by the trumpet.

[G<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>]

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<sup>54</sup>Cf. I Henry VI, IV. 111. 25.

<sup>55</sup>Roger Williams, Brief Discourse, D<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>56</sup>Art of War, 243-47.

Although the trumpets play a "dead march" in The Spanish Tragedy [IV.iv.271], they were not really melodic instruments, nor were they very common in entrances of marching soldiers. Often, as in Timon [V.iv], King John [II.i], and the earlier Horrestes [C<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>], a trumpet is present in an entrance "before a town," and is called upon to blow a signal to the town. In some instances a stage direction calls for a "flourish" before the entrance and the trumpet that enters with the soldiers can be assumed to have played it <sup>57</sup> (probably as a fanfare for the Ruler that enters with the group: in almost all of the entrances of marching groups "with trumpet," there is a king or ruler present, and there is always a "General" of some kind in the group). It may therefore probably be assumed that when the trumpet is not actually called for to play a part in the plot, it enters as 'color' inspired by the real-life association of Generals and trumpets.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>III Henry VI, II.iii; Ant. and Cleo., II.vi.

<sup>58</sup>At least one ambiguous spot occurs in Macbeth [V.vi.9]. An on-stage leader calls for trumpets to give signal to battle:

Make all our Trumpets speak, giue thẽ all breath  
Those clamorous Harbingers of Blood, & Death.

The scene begins, however, with an entrance cue that calls only for "Drumme and Colours." No trumpets are

It might be imagined that the presence of a trumpet in a procession would suggest, to at least the more militarily sophisticated members of the audience, the presence of horsemen. This possibility would be increased if other equipment associated with cavalry were present; however, there does not appear to be any evidence that the presence of a trumpet in a stage direction was ever intended in this way. The closest association of this kind is in I Henry VI [IV.iii] in a scene in which York enters with a "trumpet and many soldiers" and in which much of the dialogue is about a troop of horsemen that did not arrive.

The Malone "inventories" in the Henslowe Papers include "iiij trumpettes and a drum" [318], and the diary itself contains the entry: "Receaved of M<sup>r</sup> Henshlowe this 7<sup>th</sup> of february 1599 the some of xxijs to buy 2 trumpettes." [130]

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specifically mentioned in any stage direction in the play-- although there are "Flourish" [I.iv.1 and V.viii.59], a "Senit" [III.i.10], and a "Retreat, and Flourish" [V.viii.34], any of which might have been played on a trumpet, but could just as well have been played on drums or even haut-boys. It may be that the call for trumpets was directed to off-stage musicians, or to trumpeters in the midst of the army. If the latter, they may or may not have played at the entrance. In a play in which a bell is called a "trumpet" [II.iii.87], we cannot even be sure that the leader's call was answered by other than drums or haut-boys.



## Fife

The fife was much more popular with the military than it was in the theatre. Most contemporary sketches of armies on the march show both fife and drum.<sup>59</sup> Gerard placed the "fife" on equal terms with the "drum," requiring the same qualities of linguistic and logomachic skill from both [ $H_2^F$ ]; and he always coupled drum and fife in his drawings and diagrams. Yet the fife appears rarely in stage armies: In Edward II, Marlowe calls for "Drummes and Fifes" in an entrance long preceding a battle [1306], and in Timon an army enters "in warlike manner, with drum and fife" [IV.iii]. Although fifes are not called for in stage directions in Edmond Ironside, the author may have expected them to be used, for one speech addressed to an on-stage army just before a battle, reads

One march afore, sound trumpittes stricke vppe drumes  
lett shrickinge fifes tell Canute that Edmond Comes.  
[1036-7]

The fife would have been more difficult for an actor to master than a drum or trumpet and this may account for its rare use. It does seem out of keeping with Shakespeare's

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<sup>59</sup>Jorgensen, Shakespeare's Military World, 317: for examples see Brit. Mus. Aug. Aiii, a sketch of an English army ca. 1540; and Gerrard, Art of War, passim.



general practice to find him with a fife-playing actor apparently available, using him only in Timon. He was quite aware of its association with marching soldiers: when Hal and Peto enter "marching," "Falstaffe meetes him playing vpon his trunchion like a fife."<sup>60</sup>

Flutes were used to accompany a marching army in a dumb-show in Gorboduc [ $D_4^F$ ]. They may have been intended as rather glamorized fifes, for a court performance. In Stukely, an Irish army enters with a Bagpipe. [ $E_2^V$ ]

The general picture seems to be that the drum was called upon to accompany marching soldiers in most instances--perhaps always, although it did not necessarily always come on to the stage. At times a trumpet was added to the procession, but may have only announced the entrance with a fanfare. Ensigns were popular for their "color"--every company appears to have had them in store, and they were so associated with the honorable and noble side of battle that we can assume they were used whenever the momentary exigencies of the plot permitted it, even if the author neglected to call for them.

### Significance of Multiple Props

The presence of more than one drum (or drum and color

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<sup>60</sup> I Henry IV, Quarto, G3r.

combination) per group in the several instances where a stage direction reads "Drums and Colors," may have had more than merely spectacular significance.<sup>61</sup> In actual military practice, each company or band of men under a captain had a separate set of colors and drum, and marched as a unit. The number of men per drum and ensign ranged from 100<sup>62</sup> to 150<sup>63</sup> in English armies, to up to 450 in Continental armies.<sup>64</sup> Barnaby Rich suggested that each company should have two drums--one to stay with the colors and one to march with the troops--but this practice does not seem to have been followed. (Rich was, unlike his usually "modern" contemporaries who attacked the old-fashioned English methods, a preacher of the Ancient Disciplines, and most of his suggestions were merely cries for a preservation of an already faded Medieval formality.) One contemporary woodcut<sup>65</sup> shows three ensigns being carried abreast at

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<sup>61</sup>II Ed. IV, 108; II Tamburlaine, 76, 82, 85; Mass. At Paris, 839; Ed. II. 1306; Ed. III--"ensignes," H<sub>3</sub><sup>I</sup> Devil's Charter, 5.

<sup>62</sup>Rich, G<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>63</sup>Roger Williams, D<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>64</sup>Williams, Ibid.; Machiavelli, 234.

<sup>65</sup>Reproduced in Shakespeare's England, I, 138.

the rear of three distinct masses of men and before the following troops of horsemen. This may have been merely a flight of the artist's imagination, for I have seen no other diagrams or illustrations which show the ensign away from the center of a company. Even here there is only one ensign per company. If, therefore, in the course of a play a group of leaders and soldiers entered with more than one drum and/or ensign, it may have been part of an attempt to create the impression of a very large force, either symbolized by the soldiers on-stage, or imagined as somewhere in the vicinity beyond the tiring house wall.

### Military Gear

The terms "soldiers," "army," etc., were undoubtedly meant to suggest some kind of military appearance on the part of the entering actors. The sound of the drum, the march in some semblance of martial order, and the context of the play would have been enough to show the audience that an army of some sort was being presented, but there is also a great variety of military gear called for in the stage directions and dialogue of most of the plays. Much of it is carried by soldiers and their leaders when they march on in pre-battle processions. Some weapons and gear are not mentioned in dialogue or stage directions until the battles are under way, but

it is fairly safe to assume that (except in the case of special props) weapons required in battles were carried for their spectacular value in processions that immediately precede the battles. For reasons of convenience and coherence, therefore, all such equipment will be discussed in the following section.

A stage direction for marching soldiers in Oldcastle reads "prepared in some filthy order for warre" [1194]. It and the "Enter from warres" in Travels [ $A_3^r$ ] was undoubtedly intended to have some effect on the appearance of the entering actors, as did the direction "a rabble of poore soldiers" in Hoffman [1125]. Many stage directions and requirements of dialogue, of course, make more specific calls for weapons and military costumes and equipment.

### Swords

By far the most often called for weapon was the sword. As a military weapon it was basic equipment for all soldiers. Contemporary illustrations always show swords worn by every foot soldier, and every horseman carried a sword of some kind--the Spanish cavalry carried broadswords.<sup>66</sup> In a society in which even a farm laborer

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<sup>66</sup>Roger Williams,  $D_1^v$ .

did not go into the field without his sword, buckler, and dagger,<sup>67</sup> the sword was carried in battle as a recourse during close fighting or when more cumbersome weapons became damaged or lost. As a primary weapon, however, it was losing favor with the military even more rapidly than it was losing favor among the city gallants. Machiavelli had envisioned an army with a ratio of 300 sword-and-target-wielding warriors in every 450 men,<sup>68</sup> but by the end of the sixteenth century they were used in far fewer numbers--the Spanish used only about five in every hundred,<sup>69</sup> and Gerrard prescribed the same number for the English.<sup>70</sup> Many English armies used none at all.<sup>71</sup> Williams thought that there should be no more than 200 "targeters of the proefe" per 10,000 men (or a ratio of 2 to 100) because the weapons were too heavy for extended use, and were useful only at breaches and in trenches.<sup>72</sup> An illustration of an assault in Holinshed's Chronicles<sup>73</sup> shows swords being used only by the front

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<sup>67</sup>Shakespeare's England, II.92.

<sup>68</sup>Art of War, 98.

<sup>69</sup>Williams, D<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>70</sup>Gerrard, M<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>71</sup>Oman, 379.

<sup>72</sup>Williams, F<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>73</sup>Reproduced in Harrison, Complete Works, plate 12.

ranks, at the breach in the wall.

As a civilian weapon the sword was little match for the rapier, and in spite of the sneers of the older generation (represented by Capulet in Romeo and Juliet, and Antonio in Much Ado) it had been almost entirely displaced by the rapier before the turn of the century.<sup>74</sup>

As un-gallant as it may be to say so, Mercutio was likely to have lost the sword-rapier duel with Tybalt even if Romeo had not interfered. As is often the case with changing fashions, however, it was still more natural to speak of the sword than of the rapier in general conversation, and the frequent use of "sword" in the contemporary literature was not really representative of late sixteenth century mode. It is only correct to say that the sword was still a secondary military weapon--it was mainly a cutting weapon, and this, combined with its extra weight, made it far more useful in military circumstances than the rapier.

The characteristics of the sword made it ideal for theatrical use as well. It was short enough to be carried and wielded easily, and because it was less clumsy than

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<sup>74</sup>Norris, Costume and Fashion, 548, 696; Shakespeare's England, 93.

larger weapons, it was safer to use in the vicinity of an audience on or near the platform. Visually, the waving about of a shining sword would have been more effective than the subtle thrusting of a rapier, and the noise of clashing steel would have added to the excitement.

The sword was generally associated with the stage: in Middleton's A Faire Quarrel, one character speaking of three swords says "There's three sorts of men that would thank you for 'em, either cutlers, fencers, or players."<sup>75</sup> There was further a particular association of the sword with stage battles; and it is invariably the weapon mentioned by the critics of stage skirmishes: Sidney wrote of "two Armies . . . represented by foure swords & bucklers,"<sup>76</sup> Jonson wrote of playwrights that "with three rustie swords, . . . Fight ouer Yorke, and Lancasters long iarres,"<sup>77</sup> the Prologue to Three Ladies of London says, "We doo not shew of warlike syght, as sword and shield to shake" [A<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>], and Prologue in Birth of Hercules speaks of "Actores, crowded in / Drumbes, Ensignes,

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<sup>75</sup>Quoted in Wright, "Stage Duelling," 266.

<sup>76</sup>Defense of Poesie, 38.

<sup>77</sup>Quoted in Chambers, E. S., IV, 248.



phiphes, targetes & rusty swordes." [21-2]

It is not safe to assume that every actor owned a sword that he could have used in the theatre. Many may have carried rapiers in ordinary life. We might in fact expect actors in their capacity as mirrors of the most advanced fashions to have affected rapiers fairly early on. The only sword listed in any of the Henslowe "inventories," however, is "j long sorde,"--surprisingly listed in a section devoted to "suits." [318]

The Peacham drawing of Titus Andronicus, depicting a scene which occurs upon Titus' return from a war, shows two characters at the left holding halberds and wearing swords, and one in the center (probably Titus) wearing a sword of what appears to be standard Elizabethan length. A black-skinned actor holds a fairly long sword.<sup>78</sup> The woodcut in Four Prentices<sup>79</sup> shows four men, probably meant to represent the apprentices, brandishing various weapons and wearing swords. The woodcut was probably made by someone with a knowledge of the play, but whether his knowledge came from having seen a production or merely from reading it is difficult

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<sup>78</sup>Reproduced in e.g. Nicoll, Development of the Theater, 135.

<sup>79</sup>Reproduced in Greg, Bibliography, I, plate LXII.

to guess. If the latter, it seems at least likely that he made the illustration in keeping with theatrical performance.

There is little doubt as to the lethality of an actor's sword. On the afternoon of 15 June, 1583, Queen Elizabeth's Men were playing at an inn in Norwich, when a dispute as to payment arose between a servant of a Mr. Wynsdon and the actor Singer who was, in costume and beard, acting as gatekeeper. Tarlton and Bentley came off the stage, and Bentley hit the offender over the head with the hilt of his sword. The man fled, pursued by Singer who had taken an "arming-sword" from the stage, and by Henry Browne. Both of them struck him, and he was killed by the stroke of one or the other.<sup>80</sup> In 1622, an apprentice sitting on the stage at the Red Bull was wounded by an actor's sword, thereby starting<sup>81</sup> a riot.

Very few stage directions directly call for swords to be worn. It is likely that the ubiquitousness of the sword, especially in the context of battle, made mention unnecessary unless there was particular reason. Most

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<sup>80</sup>Chambers, E. S., II, 105.

<sup>81</sup>Reynolds, Red Bull, 13.

swords in stage directions are, in fact, found in such references. For example, instructions for swords to be drawn upon entry are common,<sup>82</sup> and sometimes an actor is instructed to handle his sword in a particular way--<sup>83</sup> in one hand while the other is used for something else,<sup>83</sup> or carried before the King.<sup>84</sup> There is also ample evidence that swords were often present when not called for in stage directions. They are often, of course, referred to in dialogue in a way that would require their presence.<sup>85</sup> Certain stage directions, although they do not specifically mention the sword, undoubtedly refer to the use of swords -- "drawne weapons,"<sup>86</sup> and "weapons drawn,"<sup>87</sup> are two rather obvious such references, as is "seizes his weapon."<sup>88</sup> It is not safe to assume that weapon always meant sword, of course, but there is no evidence that in stage direc-

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<sup>82</sup>If It Be Not Good, 334; II Iron Age, 381; James IV, 2448; Lovesick King, 3; Mass. at Paris, 401; Larum, 1126.

<sup>83</sup>Shoemaker, G<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>84</sup>James IV, 2407.

<sup>85</sup>H<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>; Ed. IV, 14; Travels, A<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>; Humour Out of Breath, Ed. Ironside, 18; etc.

<sup>86</sup>If It Be Not Good, 334.

<sup>87</sup>II Iron Age, 381.

<sup>88</sup>Jeronimo, 332.

tions it ever meant anything else.<sup>89</sup>

The phrase "beats them in," or the word "beat" used in a similar way, may imply the use of a sword. It appears in conjunction with the appearance of swords in either the dialogue or stage directions in several plays,<sup>90</sup> and it is easy to imagine that the swinging action used in wielding a sword could give rise to the idea of "beating" back an enemy. In other incidences of beat there is no particular weapon called for,<sup>91</sup> but the absence of evidence that beat was ever associated with any other weapon, and the knowledge that soldiers always wore swords, would seem to associate the weapon with the term at all times. Ample evidence seems to exist, then, that actors marching in military formation

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<sup>89</sup>It appears in Travels in a stage direction for the entrance of a group: "[one] being weaponlesse" [D<sub>4</sub><sup>V</sup>]; in Golden Age: when two men fight "and loosing their weapons embrace" [76]; in II Robin Hood: "with weapons will / We scourge your desperate will . . . Fight" [H<sub>3</sub><sup>R</sup>]; in Faustus: "enter . . . diuers with weapons" [1287]; and in Histrion-Mastix, when a group enters with "armor and weapons." [291]

<sup>90</sup>Selimus, 657, 2420; I Henry VI, I.iii; Hector, A<sub>4</sub><sup>V</sup>.

<sup>91</sup>Val. Welsh., B<sub>3</sub><sup>V</sup>, D<sub>2</sub><sup>R</sup>, G<sub>4</sub><sup>V</sup>, I<sub>1</sub><sup>R</sup>; Jeronimo, 330 332; Four Prentices, 176, 223, 234; Woodstock, 2875; Coriolanus, I.iv; Lust's Dom., E<sub>7</sub><sup>V</sup>, etc.

carried swords.<sup>92</sup>

Although every stage soldier probably wore a "sword," it is not true that each one wore an ordinary straight, thirty-six inch blade. Some variety to suit the occasion appears to have been attempted. In Larum [801], and in Three Lords and Three Ladies [G<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>], the Spanish carry rapiers and the other characters carry swords. In the Four Prentices woodcut,<sup>93</sup> a play with a North African setting, three of the men in the illustration wear curved swords, probably meant to represent scymiters--an Eastern weapon often used by the Turks. The curved sword may have also been associated with the ancient world, for it is worn by one actor in the Peacham Titus drawing,<sup>94</sup> and a falchion (a slightly curved sword) is called for in a dumb-show single combat between Hector and Achilles in Birth of Merlin [C<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>].<sup>95</sup> Tamburlaine

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<sup>92</sup>To prove the presence of swords by the use of the term beat, and to define the term by the presence of swords involves a certain amount of circular reasoning, but the establishment of the presence of swords does not really depend to any great extent on a definition of beat.

<sup>93</sup>Greg, Bibliography, I, Plate LXII.

<sup>94</sup>Illustrated in Nicoll, Development, 135.

<sup>95</sup>Tarquin, in Shakespeare's Rape of Lucrece, carries a falchion [lines 176, 509, et passim].

wears a Curtle-ax [15], or what we now call a Cutlass-- a short, single-edged sword. The long-sword (properly the hand-and-half sword)<sup>96</sup> listed in Henslowe [318] and held by Aaron in the Titus illustration--and used by Capulet<sup>97</sup>--was longer than the legal length of 36 inches and was carried un-sheathed (usually by a servant). It was wielded with two hands for pell-mell brawling and for beheadings.

### Shields

There was a moderate amount of confusion and misuse involved in the terms Buckler, Shield, and Target. The Buckler was properly a hand-held shield. Before the sword gave way to the rapier in civilian life, many young men carried small bucklers (about 12-14 inches across)--Sampson and Gregory of the House of Capulet among them<sup>98</sup>--to ward off the blows of an opponent in duels.<sup>99</sup> Even the buckler proved of little use against the rapier, however. According to the OED, the word Buckler was sometimes misused for Shield. The Shield

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<sup>96</sup>Shakespeare's England, 131.

<sup>97</sup>Rom. and Jul. I.i.81.

<sup>98</sup>Rom. and Jul. I.i.

<sup>99</sup>Norris, Costume and Fashion, 696-7.

was somewhat larger than the Buckler, and was carried on the arm. It is usually associated with Medieval arms as a general military defensive tool, and was painted with ornate designs and heraldic devices. Between the Middle Ages and the reign of Elizabeth, the military Shield had become known as a Target, and was used by soldiers whose only weapon in battle was the sword. These soldiers were called "Targets," "Targeters," or "Targets of the Proof,"<sup>100</sup> and the term "Target fighting" was used for fighting with sword and target.<sup>101</sup> Outside the Military, however, Target was often used to mean any light round shield or buckler.

Buckler was little used in the context of stage battles. Sidney, as a military man, may have been using it correctly when he wrote of "foure swords and bucklers"<sup>102</sup> as the standard cliché of stage battle, but in his role as severe critic of the theatre, he might be expected to have exaggerated the smallness of the shields by calling them bucklers--or he may have been using the word as many of his contemporaries did, to mean shield.

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<sup>100</sup>Williams, D<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>; Gerrard, M<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>101</sup>Cf. Shirley, Doubtful Heir, 278; Nabbes, Hannibal and Scipio, A<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>102</sup>Defense of Poesie, 38.

Among playwrights Target and Shield were both commonly used.

A shield may have been thought of as a painted affair; Henslowe's stock included one "shelde, with iij lyones" [320]; there is a lengthy description of the painted device on several shields in Three Lords And Three Ladies of London [ $G_1^V$ ]; and several shields in Trial of Chivalry identify their owners as French [ $H_1^F$ , et passim]. Shields are also used in other instances without evidence of devices on them, but there are no instances in which there seems to be a design on a Target. In two instances shield appears in conjunction with a weapon other than a sword,<sup>103</sup> whereas Target is only called for in conjunction with swords. This latter usage would, as we have seen, reflect the military idea of Target. On the other hand, the author of Edward III seems to have used Shield and Target interchangeably--a shield in one stage direction is referred to as a "target" in the dialogue [ $F_1^V$ ]. Again, in Four Prentices there is a scene in which four men enter, two with "shields" and two with "Scutchions" [229]. The shields are merely mentioned, but the design on each

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<sup>103</sup>A javelin in Sophonisba, 53; and spears in Selimus, 2387.



escutcheon is described. A Shield in Antonio and Mellida [221] is carried by a page. This may have been meant to represent a Pavis, which was a large shield that was carried in front of a knight by his attendant (OED).

As can be perhaps cloudily seen, the use of the three terms did not follow any pattern. And, as with Swords, there appears to be evidence that shields, of some kind, were used in stage battles. The references (above) in Doubtful Heir and Hannibal and Scipio are allusions to general stage fighting,<sup>104</sup> but there are also a few direct calls for shields which suggest their appearance in marching armies. A stage direction in Hector of Germany (a play presented by apprentices but presented in a professional theatre and perhaps written by a professional) reads "strikes the Bishops on their Targets" [D<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]; a group of mariners going into battle in I Fair Maid of the West are instructed to "Advance your Targets" [317]; and a group of "Targeters" makes an entrance in Rape Of Lucrece [243]. However, most references to Shield or Target involve only one actor, often in a scene of single combat.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup>See also J. C. S., I, 318.

<sup>105</sup>Golden Age, 50; Birth of Merlin, C<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>; Sophonisba, 13, and 24; Rape of Lucrece, 252.

Military shields were made of metal, wood, and sometimes of frames covered with fabric or leather. The "horrid noise of target fight"<sup>106</sup> and "noise of targets"<sup>107</sup> may suggest some sort of metal covering. In Sophonisba, a character enters with "his shield stricke full of darts" [13], an effect which probably called for a wooden target. A Henslowe "inventory" includes "jx eyorn targates . . . j copper targate . . . iiij wooden targates . . . j buckler."<sup>108</sup> In Thomas Nabbes' Covent Garden, played in 1632 at the Cockpit, there is a sneering reference to the players of "last Christmas" that used a borrowed pot-lid for Guy of Warwick's buckler.<sup>109</sup> Many real-life bucklers and targets had spikes mounted in their centers that were used in close battle for attacking the opponent's face,<sup>110</sup> but no such spiked targets are specifically required in any of the plays under study.

Spits and Dripping Pans were hardly standard weapons,

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<sup>106</sup>Hannibal and Scipio, A<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>107</sup>Henry VIII, Prol.

<sup>108</sup>Foakes and Rickert, 320.

<sup>109</sup>Bentley, J. C. S., I, 228.

<sup>110</sup>G. C. Stone, Glossary, 605.

but Orlando's ragged army enters carrying them in Orlando Furioso, [949-50], presumably as makeshift swords and bucklers.

### Daggers

Another fairly universal weapon in both civilian and military life was the Dagger or Poniard. In the Image of Ireland woodcut,<sup>111</sup> all the soldiers, mounted or foot, no matter what their primary weapon, wear daggers; and Gerrard emphasized that musketeers and bowmen carried them.<sup>112</sup> When the rapier became popular as a civilian weapon, the dagger replaced the buckler as an implement with which to ward off the strokes of the opponent. For this it was held in the left hand, in the so-called "Italian" manner.<sup>113</sup> Even the "sword and buckler" men had carried daggers, however, inasmuch as they doubled as eating tools. Apprentices were not permitted to carry any other weapon.<sup>114</sup> A regulation passed in 1562 had limited the length of the dagger to 12 inches.

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<sup>111</sup>Reproduced in Shakespeare's England, I, 138.

<sup>112</sup>Art of War, M<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup>.

<sup>113</sup>Norris, Costume and Fashion, 548.

<sup>114</sup>Shakespeare's England, 112.

Military men wore them behind the right hip,<sup>115</sup> and civilians usually wore them in a sheath on the right side, with the handle in front,<sup>116</sup> although a few men wore them down the front of the right thigh, in the old English fashion.

Although neither the Titus drawing nor the Four Prentices woodcut shows any of the characters wearing daggers, it is difficult to believe that such a standard item of civilian and military apparel would not have been worn in a battle play. Poniards (a type of dagger) are occasionally mentioned,<sup>117</sup> although not really in the context of battle.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>115</sup>Shakespeare's England, 134.

<sup>116</sup>Norris, 548.

<sup>117</sup>Alph. of Germany, I<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>; Lust's Dominion, E<sub>9</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>118</sup>The post-battle 'stabblings' in Stukely [L<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>] and Wounds of Civil War [2100, *et passim*] may have been done with swords or daggers. The word stab, in stage-directions, can refer to the use of a sword as well as a dagger: even in III Henry VI, after the King says to Gloucester "kill me with thy Weapon . . . My brest can better brooke thy Daggers point . . ." (V.vi.26-7), the stage direction "stab" is enacted with a sword, for after the killing Gloucester speaks of his blood-stained sword. From a theatrical point of view, a stage killing can be much more easily faked with a dagger than with a sword, and it is surprising to find so many killings done with swords on the Elizabethan stage.

## Pikes

The Pike was a pointed, spear-like weapon, mounted on a straight shaft about eighteen feet long,<sup>119</sup> although some were as short as 12 feet.<sup>120</sup> To resist cavalry the butt was thrust into the ground and the point held forward. In attack it was held by men in close formation who pushed forward by sheer weight. It was a comparatively new weapon to the English army. Although its military value had been established by the Swiss in the early fourteenth century, its critics thought it unsuited to the English character, and the old traditional weapons died hard. Only by the middle of Elizabeth's reign had it become firmly established.<sup>121</sup> Military men who had seen the pike in action on the continent thought it the greatest of all weapons for footmen,<sup>122</sup> and even Barnaby Rich, generally an advocate of the ancient disciplines, thought the pike far superior to other weapons.<sup>123</sup> The Image of Ireland illustration of

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<sup>119</sup>G. C. Stone, Glossary, p. 501 and figure 639.

<sup>120</sup>Shakespeare's England, 138.

<sup>121</sup>Oman, 373.

<sup>122</sup>Roger Williams,  $F_3^r$ ; Gerrard,  $H_3^v$ .

<sup>123</sup>Pathway to Military Practice,  $K_4^v$ .

an English army on the march, published in 1586, shows most of the footmen with pikes,<sup>124</sup> and the illustration of an assault in Holinshed's Chronicles<sup>125</sup> shows the very front ranks fighting with swords, and all the rest with pikes.

In some way the pike became thought of as a "gentleman's" weapon.<sup>126</sup> In writing about the Spanish, Roger Williams said that most of "their Gentlemen & vantagers" carried the pike,<sup>127</sup> and Gerrard added that, in "fronts" (the companies that marched at the fore in a procession) even the captains, lieutenants, and sergeants carried them.<sup>128</sup>

Gerrard devoted much space to the weapon and its manner of handling in processions.<sup>129</sup> He said that it should be carried (to make "a beautiful and pleasant shew to the beholders") on the shoulder. It was held by the thumb, "whereby it is ruled," and held by the hand

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<sup>124</sup>Shakespeare's England, I, 138.

<sup>125</sup>Reproduced in Harrison, Complete Works, plate 12.

<sup>126</sup>Shakespeare's England, I, 138.

<sup>127</sup>Williams, D<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>128</sup>Gerrard, M<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>129</sup>Ibid., H<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>-H<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>.

that was on the side of the shoulder on which it rested (right hand, right shoulder; left hand, left shoulder,) "with il Gombedo alto."<sup>130</sup> Those on the right rank, he suggested, should carry the pike on the right shoulder, those on the left, on the left shoulder. Those in the center could shift at leisure, but he considered it best for them to carry it on the left shoulder with their right hands on their daggers. In order for the procession to look its best he required that all pikes be adjusted so that they were the same height in the air, and that each soldier should march with the butt end of the weapon behind the knee joint of the soldier in front of him, and with his head under the point of the pike in front of him.

Gerrard thought that the army should be made up of at least forty per-cent pikes,<sup>131</sup> but general practice, in 1584 at least, called for only one third of a company to be Pikemen.<sup>132</sup> This was still quite a considerable

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<sup>130</sup>This probably derives from the Italian Gambo (often Gambetto) which means small or thin stalk, or shaft. That it might mean Gomito, or elbow, seems anatomically impossible. See illustration in Ffoulkes, "European Arms and Armor," 136.

<sup>131</sup>Gerrard, M<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>132</sup>Oman, 379.

increase from the time of Machiavelli, when only twenty-two percent of an army carried them.<sup>133</sup>

The popularity of the pike, and its newness, must have made for a minor dilemma in the theatre. Although it would have been quite simple to make a stage pike (if the real thing were not easily available), and its appearance could have been wonderfully spectacular, the extreme length of the weapon would have made it most awkward to get on and off the stage and to handle in the tiring house. It would not have been too difficult to manage a couple of ten-foot high banners, but an added eight or so feet in length would have raised real problems. And any more than one or two would have compounded the difficulty. This may be reflected in the Revels Accounts listings: although over two dozen different weapons are included in the lists, the pike does not appear.<sup>134</sup> The "half-pike" called for in the children's company production of Chapman's Widow's Tears<sup>135</sup> may have

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<sup>133</sup>Art of War, 98.

<sup>134</sup>Feuillerat, Documents . . . of the Revels, passim. For a complete listing of the weapons listed in the Revels Accounts see Morton Paterson, "Stagecraft of the Revels . . .," 41.

<sup>135</sup>Parrott, Comedies, 408. Such a weapon does not appear in the G. C. Stone Glossary, nor in other studies I have seen.



been one answer to the difficulty, but a short pike would not have been very spectacular, and would have seemed silly in the hands of an adult. The Knight of the Burning Pestle (played by the Children of the Revels) calls for one of Ralph's army to have a Spanish Pike [V.ii], and there is a pike tossing display by a boy in "toy"-scale armor in Webster's White Devil [II.i]--half-pikes may have been used in these plays. Few groups enter with pikes--in Rape of Lucrece, a group of captains enter "with their pikes and Targeters" [243], and before the battle in Edward I, "Lluellen is slaine with a Pike staffe" by "soldiers" [2372]. In several instances dialogue might have suggested the on-stage presentation of pikes: in Sir Thomas Wyatt, a group of soldiers is on the stage before a battle, and their leader says "bring our Muscateers, To flancke our pikes" [437]; in Devil's Charter, Caesar, speaking to on-stage soldiers, says "And that our pikes and swordes in blood and slaughter, / Are staine and sheath'd quiet in our scabberds" [2621-2]; and in Four Prentices the leader of a group of on-stage soldiers says "Come let vs line our Pikes with Muskettiers" [241]. Pikes would have been available in the latter play at any rate, for in it two men give a demonstration of skill with the pike--"they tosse their pikes" [203]--in a scene that

was memorable enough to be mentioned by Beaumont in Knight of the Burning Pestle. [IV.ii]

The frontispiece to Francis Kirkham's collection of drolls, The Wits, or Sport upon Sport (1672), shows an improvised stage used in performances during the period when the public theatres were closed by the Puritans.<sup>136</sup> Referred to by Nicoll as the "Red Bull drawing,"<sup>137</sup> it is no longer thought of as representing the Red Bull, roofed or otherwise, or any other Elizabethan theatre,<sup>138</sup> but it is interesting to note that in the context of a theatrical edifice on the stage of which appears characters from Elizabethan plays, the artist has included two pictures or paintings on the tiring house wall. One of them depicts two armies armed with pikes, and charging at each other; the other shows a group of men with pikes marching over a hill.

### Bills

The bill was the traditional weapon of the English foot-soldier. Sometimes called the "brown Bill," because

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<sup>136</sup> Illustrated in Greg, Bibliography, III, plate CXXIII.

<sup>137</sup> Development, 121.

<sup>138</sup> Reynolds, Red Bull, 30.

it was invariably rusted,<sup>139</sup> it was adapted from the tool used to cut down branches of trees, and was the only major weapon made in England.<sup>140</sup> The length of the staff was only from six to seven feet, and it was swung in battle--it was this swinging action that was thought properly suited to the English character by the critics of the pike.<sup>141</sup> It was also the traditional weapon of watchmen. Until the middle of Elizabeth's reign, the bow and the bill were the normal army weapons,<sup>142</sup> but they both lost favor very rapidly thereafter.

In spite of the fact that bills could have been much more easily managed on the stage than could pikes, and would have been historically much more fitting for the great majority of history plays, the bill appears only twice, and then only in dialogue. In Guy of Warwick, the Sultan (whom we would not expect to be associated with the English bill at all) tells his group of followers "wee'l parley now with Pole-axe, Bills and swords" [C<sub>2</sub><sup>V</sup>]. There is no certainty that any bills were

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<sup>139</sup>Shakespeare's England, 139.

<sup>140</sup>G. C. Stone, Glossary, 113 and figure 149.

<sup>141</sup>Rich, K<sub>3</sub><sup>V</sup>.

<sup>142</sup>Oman, 373.

actually on the stage at this moment. In Leir, a general tells his men to "Gall them, braue Halberts, with your sharp point Billes" [2425]. Bills did not have points, however, and this line may reflect a certain amount of interchangeable designation between bills and halberds.

### Halberds

The Halberd was quite similar, in appearance and use, to the bill. Originally a Swiss infantry weapon, it is the weapon generally associated with the "Beefeaters" at the Tower of London.<sup>143</sup> About the same length as the bill, it has a more complicated head, with a point for thrusting, an ax-head for striking blows, and a hooked spike for thrusting down scaling ladders or hooking horsemen from their horses. Its military function was to protect the ensign, and halberds were often called "the slaughter of the field," for they fought only when great extremity of battle had so disrupted the army that the centrally situated ensign was exposed to danger.<sup>144</sup> In 1584, an English company was about fifteen percent halberds--40 out of 250<sup>145</sup>--although most contemporary

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<sup>143</sup>G. C. Stone, Glossary, 275 and figure 344.

<sup>144</sup>Gerrard, M<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>145</sup>Oman, 379.

military writers (who generally equated halberds with the obsolete bill) thought a much smaller number would do. Sir Roger Williams, especially, was insistent on the elimination of "short weapons," as had been already done in the rest of Europe, although he would have permitted proportionately many more halberds and bills than swords and targets.<sup>146</sup> In the Image of Ireland woodcut there are a very few lines of halberds sprinkled in among the pikes, and they are the only other weapon (aside from a separate contingent of "shot") shown for foot-men.

Henslowe paid eighteen shillings for "holberdes" in 1599.<sup>147</sup> Two men in the "Titus" illustration hold halberds, and two men in the Four Prentices woodcut brandish what may have been intended by the artist for either simple halberds or complicated bills. In the private theatre play Sophonisba two lieutenants are assigned halberds when an army marches on to the stage [53], and in I Robin Hood, a group of "Officers with halberts" makes an entrance [ $D_3^r$ ], although in the latter play the ensuing fray cannot rightly be called a battle.

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<sup>146</sup>Williams,  $F_3^r$ .

<sup>147</sup>Foakes and Rickert, 185.

### Pole-Axe

The pole-axe was a general term for any long handled axe, and many were similar enough in appearance to the halberd to make us suspect that the latter was sometimes called a pole-axe. The Sultan's threat to parley with "Pole-axe, Bills and swords" in Guy of Warwick [C<sub>2</sub><sup>V</sup>] gives us no clue. There are two men with "Pollaxes" that are involved in a battle in Jeronimo [332], and two "poleaxes" are called for at the very end of a battle scene in Valiant Welshman. [E<sub>3</sub><sup>R</sup>]

### Axe

In a dumb show in Birth of Merlin, one man carries an Axe, along with a sword and target [C<sub>3</sub><sup>R</sup>], but he does not appear in the battle sequence later in the play--his weapon may have, of course. Henslowe's "inventories" include "j wooden hatchett" and "j lether hatchete."<sup>148</sup> Hatchets do not, however, appear in any of the battle sequences under study.

### Bows

The bow was regularly associated with the bill in real life--"Bows and Bills" was the traditional alarm

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<sup>148</sup>Foakes and Rickert, 319.

cry at the discovery of an attack; similar to the "Hay Rube" of the modern circus.<sup>149</sup> It went out of military use even before its companion weapon did. In 1584 an army carried about 15 percent of its strength in bowmen,<sup>150</sup> but in 1587 Barnaby Rich was writing that the bow was already obsolete and had been put aside.<sup>151</sup> In 1588, only 80 out of 4000 untrained men recruited in London were assigned as bowmen, and in 1595, after much controversy the bow was officially eliminated from the army.<sup>152</sup> In 1627, when the army wanted a group of bowmen for a special mission, they could not find enough for a small company.<sup>153</sup> Even this disappearance was late in comparison to continental trends--Machiavelli had already noted the disuse of the bow in Italy by the time he published his Art of War in about 1520. [98]

Aside from its use in the 15th century Robin Hood and the Knight, in which Friar Tuck uses a bow in battle [280], there is only slight evidence that the bow may have

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<sup>149</sup>Shakespeare's England, 139.

<sup>150</sup>Oman, 379.

<sup>151</sup>Path-way, K<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>152</sup>Oman, 381-2.

<sup>153</sup>Shakespeare's England, 139.

been used on the Elizabethan stage in battle scenes. The presence of bowmen is suggested by a stage direction for the entrance, during a battle, of one actor with an "arrow in his necke," in True Tragedy [ $D_3^V$ ], and by a direction for an actor to enter "with an arrow in his brest," in Rape of Lucrece [249]. The leader of an army about to make an assault in David and Bethsabe threatens to "shoot forth shafts as thick . . . as . . ." [183]. The author, Peele, would appear, from this, to have envisioned some of the actors, at least, armed with bows and arrows.

Other references are less certain. In Edward III there is a reference in the dialogue to a shortage of arrows during battle [ $H_3^R$ ], and in Sir Thomas Wyatt, Wyatt's instructions to his army includes "let all our archery, / Fall off in winges of shot a both sides of the van" [437]. Even in plays more likely to have been performed in a public theatre than these two, such ambiguous reference would make the appearance of bows on the stage only a vague possibility.

### Spears

Although the spear was not properly a European military weapon it may have been used in some instances in real life: in his attack on the out-of-date traditional



weapons in England, Roger Williams included it, along with bows and bills.<sup>154</sup> It may be that the hunting spear, a simple weapon about seven to eight feet in length,<sup>155</sup> was carried into battle by untrained men, and perhaps, although there is no evidence for it, the pike may have been referred to as a spear.

Before a battle in Selimus, a leader exhorts his janizaries to "Aduance your shields and vncontrolled speares" [2388]. In a dumb-show in Birth of Merlin the character of Achilles carries a spear and falchion for a single combat [ $C_3^r$ ], but there is no hint of its appearance in the battle scenes later in the play.<sup>156</sup> Javelins are called for in single combats in Golden Age (50) and Sophonisba (53), and they may have made appearance in later battle formations.

### Lances

The Lance was the weapon of the horseman. About twelve feet long, it was made of ash and was of fairly

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<sup>154</sup>Williams,  $F_3^r$ .

<sup>155</sup>Illustrated in Harrison, 98.

<sup>156</sup>There may have been a trick spear used in Lyly's Woman In The Moon, a play without a battle: Pandora "snatcheth the speare out of STESIAS hand & layes about her," after which Stesia "sheweth his shirt all bloody." [ $B_4^r$ ]. The trick may just as well have been in the shirt, however.

uniform thickness for war, but was made of fir or pine and tapered for jousting.<sup>157</sup> It was not until after 1600 that the Continental influence was felt and other weapons began to displace it in the English cavalry<sup>158</sup>--the Image of Ireland woodcut (printed in 1581) shows all the cavalrymen with lances. A Henslowe "inventory" for March 10, 1598, includes "viij lances,"<sup>159</sup> and in 1602 he purchased more: "Layd owt for the company the 3 of septmber 1602 to bye iiij Lances for the comody of thomas hewedes & m<sup>r</sup> smythes some of viij<sup>s</sup>."<sup>160</sup> This seems a rather large number for one company, especially in view of the infrequent appearance of horses on the Elizabethan stage. Heywood, however, may have been partial to the lance--Achilles and Hector each carry one in his I Iron Age [320]. The only entrance of a group of actors in which a stage direction calls for lances is in the early Three Lords and Three Ladies of London: three Lords and their pages enter on each side, and the six pages carry lances with banners appended [G<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>]. In Edward III there

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<sup>157</sup>Shakespeare's England, 137.

<sup>158</sup>Oman, 386.

<sup>159</sup>Foakes and Rickert, 319.

<sup>160</sup>Ibid., 215.

is a pre-battle scene in which a leader presents each of his lieutenants with a piece of battle equipment (carried on during the scene by heralds), one of which is a lance. [ $F_1^V$ ]

The appearance of a lance on the stage in a battle or pre-battle context might have been intended to suggest that cavalry were being represented. The lance is called for so little, however, that it is difficult to make any definite judgement. There is no hint of horse or cavalry in the dialogue surrounding any of the above instances. The only other mention of a lance occurs in Lochrine, and although there is an association with horse, there is no evidence that any lances were on the stage: before a battle a leader tells his son to take a group of "horse, launciers and light armed knights" and to sneak up behind the enemy during the battle [768-775]. During the battle scene later in the play, there is no mention of any weapons at all. [832-6]

#### Sticks and Clubs

Lances were sometimes called Staves<sup>161</sup> but the few uses of stave in stage directions suggest sticks or staffs.

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<sup>161</sup>Shakespeare's England, 137.

In the fifteenth century play Robin Hood and the Friar, staves and clubs are called for in the dialogue, during a battle between Robin's men and the Sheriff's men [285]. Cade and his mob enter "with long staves" in the Contention [ $F_3^r$ ], but there is no mention of weapons in the corresponding entry in II Henry VI [IV.ii], nor is there any hint of staves in the dialogue.

Henslowe listed "iij clobes" in one "inventory."<sup>162</sup> The only club wielded during a stage battle is in the hands of a rural character, Corineus, in Locrine [1294]. This, the staves in the hands of Kentish-men in the Contention, the clubs in Robin Hood and the Friar, and the ashen cudgel wielded by the old countryman Strowd in Blind Beggar of Bednal Green [ $I_4^r$ ] suggests that sticks and clubs were associated with rural characters.

### Firearms

Firearms achieved their military importance in the sixteenth century. Twenty years after the beginning of the century, Machiavelli was already behind the times and did not foresee their importance.<sup>163</sup> His projected armies were made up primarily of swords and a few pikes,

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<sup>162</sup>Foakes and Rickert, 319.

<sup>163</sup>Art of War, xlvii.

with only a tiny handful of arquebusiers.<sup>164</sup> Things developed rapidly, and by the fourth quarter of the century most of the continent had greatly increased its use of firearms. Much controversy ranged throughout English military circles, however, about the relative effectiveness and speed of the bow and what was usually called "shot." Among many books devoted to the praise of firearms was Roger Williams' Briefe Discourse of Warre, in which, by citing the example of Spanish experience, he warned England to catch up before it was too late.<sup>165</sup> Sixty per-cent of a Spanish company, he wrote, were "shot" (mostly musketeers) ever since the Duke D'alva had experienced great success with them. The English were not completely blind to the value of shot, however; there had been horsed arquebusiers at the Battle of Pinkie,<sup>166</sup> and by 1584 about a third of an English foot-company were equipped with firearms.<sup>167</sup> In 1595, when the bow was officially eliminated from the army, it was announced that henceforth only caliver-men and musketeers would be trained.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>164</sup>Ibid., 99.

<sup>165</sup>Williams, esp. D<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>-P<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>166</sup>Oman, 386.

<sup>167</sup>Oman, 379.

<sup>168</sup>Oman, 384.

The Arquebus (usually called Harquebus) and the Musket were actually slightly different weapons, but differentiation was rarely made between them; the terms were used interchangeably, and also as a general term for large firearms in general. They were longer and heavier than the similar Caliver. All three were fore-runners of the rifle. They were heavy, awkward, smoky, slow in use, and only moderately accurate.

But few weapons could have been more spectacular. The musketeer carried his "piece," a flask for his powder, powder, shot, a touch-bore for setting off the powder, matches in case the touch-bore did not work, iron and a mold to make more bullets, a ramrod, a "worm" for cleaning the barrel, a covering or case for the piece, a sword and dagger, a headpiece, and a breast-high forked stick fastened to his wrist with string.<sup>169</sup> In action, the point of the stick was placed on the ground, and the piece was rested on the fork. Ignited by either a match or a wonderfully complicated system of springs and levers that scraped a flint into the powder pan, the burst of smoke was enough to hide the musketeer completely from view.

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<sup>169</sup>Gerrard, M<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>. See illustration in Ffoulkes, "European Arms and Armor," 136, and C. Canby, History of Weaponry, plates 102-108.

The average musket was five and a half feet long with a barrel over four feet in length; the caliver was a bit shorter than five feet, and considerably lighter. The military advantage of lightness came expensively: the musket cost twenty-seven shillings--some Dutch-made muskets cost as little as twenty-two shillings--while the caliver cost thirteen pounds, six shillings.<sup>170</sup>

Pistols--and the pistol-like carbine, the Petronel--were usually associated with horsemen (OED), and the Cavalry lance began to give way to the sword and pistol in England after 1600, following earlier established practice on the continent.<sup>171</sup> Falstaff, with a "charge of foot," carries a pistol case, at least, but this may not reflect military practice as much as a Shakespearean situation.<sup>172</sup>

The theatre was not slow to discover firearms. As early as 1565, in the dumb-show before the fifth act of Gorboduc "there came foorth vpon the Stage a companie of Hargubusiers and of Armed men all in order of Battaile" [D<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>], and in 1579 Holinshed saw another "shew" at court

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<sup>170</sup>Shakespeare's England, 135.

<sup>171</sup>Oman, 386.

<sup>172</sup>I Henry IV, V.iii.

in which armies of "shot" marched and performed.<sup>173</sup>

We can assume that the Court Revels office could afford, or at least have had easy access to such expensive equipment, but we might wonder if ordinary public companies would have spent so much money on such props unless they were used a great deal. There are no firearms of any kind in the Henslowe "inventories," but several plays belonging to the Admiral's Men and other Henslowe groups over the years call for them: in Tamburlaine the Governor of Babylon is shot on the stage by a group of on-stage men [128], and in Four Prentices two men enter with pistols [244]. In Leir, a group of on-stage soldiers are told by their leader to "Call them, braue Shot, with your Artillery." [2424]. Reference to "Muscateers" is made in a speech to on-stage soldiers in Sir Thomas Wyatt [437], a play that some critics have also associated with a Henslowe group.<sup>174</sup>

There is much less evidence of firearms in use by other companies. Seven men are called upon to enter "armed with Petronels" in the Paul's Boy's I Antonio and Mellida [223], and there are two "pieces" required

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<sup>173</sup>Chronicles, 6I<sub>5</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>174</sup>E. S., III, 293.



for Ralph's company in Knight of the Burning Pestle [V.ii]. The latter Queen's Revels play does not, however, include a battle.

Day and Rowley must have expected firearms to be used in a demonstration of a battle in Travels, for afterward most of the talk of the performance deals with

. . . those your Engines,  
 (We cannot giue their proper Character)  
 Those lowd tongues that spit their spleene in fire,  
 Drowning the groanes of your then dying friends,  
 And with the smoake hiding the gaspe of life.  
[A<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>]

A few lines later, the leader of the army that presented the battle says:

Yet haue we engins of more force then these,  
 after which speech a stage direction reads "Chambers go off." [A<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>]

In the manuscript of the play Dick of Devonshire, written about 1626, a stage direction after an off-stage battle calls for three men to enter with "musketts" [434]. Although the play appears to have been prepared for performance, we do not know by whom it was written, nor for which theatre.

On one occasion, on the sixteenth of November, 1587, the Admiral's Men borrowed calivers for a performance.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>175</sup>E. S., II, 135.

It is difficult to imagine, however, that it was standard procedure to borrow equipment that was required as an integral part of a play. Perhaps the expense of muskets and calivers made it necessary to do so, but it would have undoubtedly presented difficulties on tour.

### Other Gear

Weapons were not the only identifying gear of marching soldiers. At least two of the leaders in Four Prentices carry Warders--a staff or rod symbolizing authority and used to give signals in battle--for there is a warder-tossing display shortly after the pike-tossing display [204]. Before several assault scenes Scaling Ladders are carried on to the stage,<sup>176</sup> and the wall scalings that occur in Selimus [1200], Brasen Age [224], and Devil's Charter [66] are difficult to conceive without ladders.

Before a ship-board battle in Fortune by Land and Sea, Heywood and Rowley called for "Mariners, all furnish with Sea devices fitting for a fight" [416].

There is no hint in the dialogue as to how they expected the direction to be carried out, and in no other sea-battles

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<sup>176</sup>I Henry VI, II.ii; Henry V, III.i; Humor Out of Breath, H<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>; and the early Forestes, D<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>.

are there any particularly nautical weapons or gear mentioned.

### Armor

The typical "shining armor" of the Medieval knight was no longer worn in battle, although it was still popular for jousts and for show. The Corselet, a body armor, was still widely used, but was beginning to lose favor. At the Battle of Zutphen, in 1586, the English wore only Helmets, (often called Casks), and Cuirasses--breast and back covering made usually of leather.<sup>177</sup> In the Image of Ireland woodcut of an English army of about the same period, the pikemen and halberdiers wear helmets and upper body and arm armor, and the musketeers seem to wear no armor except helmets. The horsemen are armored to the knee--except the trumpeters, who appear to wear ordinary hats and doublets.

The theatrical use of the word armor is somewhat ambiguous. It may have meant any amount or type. In Woodstock, two men enter "W<sup>th</sup> Armour" [2673], and one complains that he is so laden he cannot move. In Histrion-Mastix a group of soldiers runs across the stage in "armor

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<sup>177</sup>Shakespeare's England, 128.

and weapons" [291], but there is no suggestion in the text as to how complete, or of what type, the armor was. A "coate armour" is presented to one captain before a battle in Edward III [ $F_1^V$ ], and another man is given a "Helmet," but the battle equipment given out in this scene seems to be more symbolic of the King's good wishes than intended for the fray, and so might have been of any kind and perhaps not worn. In I Tamburlaine, two men, with "other Lords and Souldiers" enter, and one begins the scene with the words "Come . . . let vs to this geere" [22]: this suggests the use of armor, but hardly requires it. In II Tamburlaine, the leader of an on-stage "traine" refers to his "warlike hoste" which "in compleat armour rest" [76], but these lines could easily enough have been construed as applying to an off-stage group.

Many plays include sequences in which soldiers put on armor in sight of the audience.<sup>178</sup> In Richard III in the scenes in Richard's tent just before the battle of Bosworth field, there is much talk of armor: Richard inquires about the state of his beaver and the readiness of his armor, and instructs Ratcliff to come later to

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<sup>178</sup>Cf. Antony and Cleopatra, IV.iv.; Macbeth, IV.iii., etc.

help him put it on; several characters in Richmond's group speak of helmets; and when Ratcliff enters presumably to assist in dressing Richard he says "Your friends . . . buckle on their armor" [V.iii]. But after all this there is no direct call for armor in Richard's later entrance, even though earlier in the play Shakespeare had carefully called for Richard and Buckingham to enter in "rotten armor." [III.v]

In Selimus a leader threatens to "Engraeue our prowess on their buganets" [2421]--the Burgonet was a head-piece for mounted men--just before his opponents enter, but there is no mention of any armor when they enter. Other references to armor on the stage involve only single characters: in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida, 'one in sumptuous armor' enters briefly [V.vi.26];<sup>179</sup> Macbeth goes into battle with the words "At least we'll die with harness on our back" [V.v.52]; in Sophonisba one man enters carrying a cuirass and cask, which he later wears in battle [24]; in Antonio and Mel-lida, there is a scene in which eight men enter, one in armor and the others carrying petronels [221]; one of Ralph's company in Knight of the Burning Pestle wears a

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<sup>179</sup>Quarto. Folio reads "one in Armour."

corselet [V.ii]; in Lust's Dominion the Moor speaks of his armor [E<sub>7</sub><sup>V</sup>]; in Hector of Germany one character exits calling for his armor, and re-enters a short time later [H<sub>4</sub><sup>V</sup>]; and in I Iron Age, during a battle, "Diomed looseth his Helmet" [310]. In a play without a battle scene, Chapman's Widow's Tears, a stage direction reads "Enter Lysander like a Soldier disguised at all parts; a half-pike, gorget, etc."<sup>180</sup> A gorget was a throat armour: it would be somewhat strange for a soldier to wear only that one piece of armour. A Henslowe "inventory" includes "j greve armer."<sup>181</sup>

In spite of the fact that armor is not often specifically required in stage directions or in the developments of plot and dialogue, the almost off-handed quality of the few references together with the evidence of the two "illustrations" of stage soldiers leads us to suspect that armour of some kind, like the sword, was much more in evidence than the sparse testimony would suggest. In the Peacham drawing of Titus Andronicus the two men in Elizabethan costume appear to be wearing back, chest, and shoulder armor, and one of them has arm covering and what

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<sup>180</sup>Parrott, Comedies, 408.

<sup>181</sup>Foakes and Rickert, 320.

might be a plumed helmet as well. The four men in the Four Prentices woodcut wear what appear to be breast plates and perhaps shoulder and arm armor. They also wear spurs. The woodcuts in Tamburlaine<sup>182</sup> and in Valiant Welshman [ $A_1^V$ ] of heavily armored men do not, unfortunately, show any relationship to the theatre. Several recent critics have suggested that armor was not only commoner than stage directions would lead us to imagine, but that there was an increasing tendency to make it historically and nationally accurate.<sup>183</sup>

The terms "armed" or "in arms" could have, according to OED, referred to either weapons, or armor, or both. Therefore the "companie . . . of Armed men" in Gorboduc [ $D_3^F$ ]; the "armed men" mentioned as having been in a "shew," in Holinshed;<sup>184</sup> the six men "at arms" in a stage direction [863] and the "Armed men" spoken of in the dialogue [945] in Edmond Ironside; the "armed troops" addressed by a leader in Edward IV; the "Souldiers vp in Armes," in Valiant Welshman [ $E_1^F$ ]; and "Callymath in Armes"

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<sup>182</sup> Illustrated in Tucker Brooke, Works, 72.

<sup>183</sup> McManaway, "Richard II at Covent Garden," 175; Douglas Russell, "Shakespearean Costume," 105; and H. H. Smith, "Some Principles of Elizabethan Costume," 240-45.

<sup>184</sup>  $6I_5^V$ .

in Travels of the Three English Brothers [ $B_2^r$ ] might conceivably have worn armor and carried weapons. It seems likely that the "compleatly armed" soldier in If You Know Not Me [337] and the soldier called for to be "arm'd a cape a pee," in Sophonisba [I.ii], would wear armor of some sort, whereas the stage directions "arm'd after the Trojan manner with Target, Sword, and Battel-ax, in Birth of Merlin [ $C_3^r$ ] and "flings down his Armes," in Valiant Welshman [ $I_1^r$ ] would require only weapons.

Although there is plenty of evidence to show that a great variety of weapons appeared on the Elizabethan stage in the course of pre-battle activities, it is very difficult to be specific about any one production or even about the general picture. In the Titus drawing there are halberds, swords, a scimitar, armor, and a standard--and, incidentally, Roman costumes--none of which, except for swords, are called for in the text of the play. Not even the swords are mentioned in the stage directions. The Four Prentices woodcut shows scimitars, halberds, spurs, and armor, none of which appear in the text of the play. It is not at all certain, of course, that these pictures are based on actual performances of the plays, but they do, as was pointed out above, suggest that weapons and equipment were used more often than the



texts would lead us to believe.

### Military Gear-Occurence

Most weapons occur in stage directions when something special is involved with them: an entrance with a drawn sword, men beating on targets, pikes tossed, etc. In most of these cases they are not mentioned at the time of the first entrance, but only when the unusual action occurs. We are left, then, with a strong feeling that there must have been many times when weapons were carried and armor was worn for "color," but because they were not involved in a particular piece of stage business, were not mentioned. For example, that Falstaff wore a pistol case we know only because, in the midst of battle, we learn that there is no pistol in it. We are left to wonder if Shakespeare wrote the scene the way he did because he assumed that the actor would normally be wearing a pistol case. And we further wonder if many other actors would have normally worn pistol cases for battle scenes.

There is little help here in recourse to prompt copies and reported texts. In Blind Beggar of Bednal Green, for instance--a prompt copy text--there is specific notation in a prompter's note of a jacket for one

character, but there is no mention of weapons in stage directions before or during a scene which involves the choosing and using of sword and target, rapier, backsword, and cudgel [I<sub>4</sub><sup>r&v</sup>]. There are, in fact, no specific prompter's notations for weapons in any of the prompt or theatrical texts involved in this study.<sup>185</sup>

A comparison of the Contention and II Henry VI also raises a few questions. The Contention is generally accepted as an actors' reconstruction of II Henry VI, and the text of the latter as it stands in the Folio appears to be from an authorial fair copy used as a prompt book.<sup>186</sup> And yet there are different weapons called for in parallel scenes in the two plays, and there are omissions in the former that might suggest stage practice.

In the Cade scenes, for instance, the opening lines call for different weapons. In II Henry VI, the text reads:

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<sup>185</sup>There is a marginal notation in Believe As You List, a King's men's play of 1631, that reads "All the swords ready" [2378-80]. Quite a few lines later, two men "& Soldiers" enter [2588], but swords are not mentioned in the directions or dialogue. Much later, a servant enters with "many swords" and is followed by another with "more swordes" [2718-23]. Although the soldiers probably carried swords, it is most likely that the stage adapter's notation was for the servants' entrances.

<sup>186</sup>See Play List.

Enter Beuis, and Iohn Holland

Beuis. Come and get thee a sword, though made of a  
Lath . . . [IV.ii]

The same entrance in the Contention reads:

Enter two of the Rebels with long staues.

George. Come away Nick, and put a long staffe in thy  
pike, and prouide thy selfe, . . . [F<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>]

A few lines later, in the Contention text, Cade and his mob enter "with long staues," but there is no mention of any weapons in the entrance, or in the ensuing scene, in II Henry VI. Later in the same scene, Stafford enters, and, in the II Henry VI text, tells the rebels to "Lay your weapons downe," but the same speech in Contention leaves out any mention of weapons. Two lines in the II Henry VI dialogue mention weapons in the context of particular activity, and could conceivably reflect the way the author envisioned the scene: after a skirmish involving Cade's mob and the authorities, one of Cade's followers speaks of his having been thrust in the mouth with a spear [IV.vii.10], and before an exit one of Cade's men asks him "When shall we go . . . and take vp commodities vpon our billes?" [IV.vii.135]. Neither of these lines are present in the Contention. Bills and spears would be likely weapons for men of Kent, but the omission of these lines in the memorial text suggests that Shakespeare's hints were not followed up in production.

Near the end of both texts there is a scene in which Warwick enters in the middle of a battle scene calling for Clifford, and a few lines later Clifford enters and confronts him. In the Contention, but not in II Henry VI, Clifford speaks from off-stage just before he enters:

Clifford speakes within  
 Warwicke . . . view the way that Clifford hewes  
 with his murthering Curtelaxe . . . [H<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>]

This suggests that the actor playing Clifford entered with a cutlass and had interpolated a reference to it in his speech.

Inconsistency between an authorial text and what was probably practiced on the stage is also found in the next play of the series. Parallel descriptions of the same off-stage activity in III Henry VI and True Tragedy not only mention different weapons, but imply a different imaginative picture of one scene. In II Henry VI, Richard describes the death of Warwick's brother in battle thus:

Thy Brothers blood the thirsty earth hath drunk,  
 Broach'd with the Steely point of Cliffords Launce:  
 . . .  
 So vnderneath the belly of their Steeds, . . .  
 The Noble Gentleman gaue vp the ghost. [II.iii.15-22]

In the True Tragedy there is no mention of a lance, and the text reads:

Vntill with thousand swords he was beset,  
 And manie wounds made in his aged brest. [C<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>]

Clifford's lance, in the former text, is coupled with the mention of horse, whereas all hint of horsemen has been left out of the memorial text. This suggests that Shakespeare, in his imagination as he wrote, envisioned the scene as involving horsemen, but the players, engaged in the mundane activity of moving about the stage on foot, consciously or unconsciously translated the description to one of the activity of foot soldiers. If Clifford's lance had been present on the stage at any time in the preceding scenes--it is of course not called for in any stage directions or on-stage activity--the players might have had more occasion to convey the lines as Shakespeare had written them.

Without trying to labor what are a tiny handful of perhaps unrepresentative cases, we are left with the feeling that weapons mentioned in texts as closely related to the theatre as II and III Henry VI<sup>187</sup> were not necessarily used on the stage, and that in many instances a large variety of weapons not even hinted at in the text appeared in the hands of the actors.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>187</sup>See Play List.

<sup>188</sup>Cf. also a possible inconsistency in I Iron Age [296]: in the midst of battle, one leader is directed in one of the many lengthy, apparently authorial S.D.'s, to hold up his lance--but says "you see my sword / Glas'd in the sanguine moisture of your friends." But see Play List for comment on the stage directions in this play.

In the course of the two parts of Tamburlaine, plays full of marching armies, no weapons are mentioned in stage directions, and aside from a few swords and a dagger that are necessary to the plot (usually wielded by only one actor), no weapons are required for the furtherance of the plot. But, in the dialogue of the plays there is mentioned a great variety of weapons: cutlass, "geere," swords, lances, complete armor, shot, spears, bills, halberd, axe, Turkish swords, pikes, and muskets. Many of them are mentioned more than a few times, and all of them are mentioned in speeches that imply their possession by armies whose representatives, at least, are on the stage when the speeches are given.

The Tamburlaine plays were presented by a Henslowe group, but as has been noted in the course of the survey of weapons above, there is remarkably little in the way of weapons in the Henslowe papers: eight lances, three clubs, halberds, two hatchets, and a long sword. Other weapons are called for in other Admiral's Men's plays however: pikes in Four Prentices, armor and poniards in Lust's Dominion (the text of which dates from a period long removed from Tamburlaine, however), and there is a call for musketeers in the dialogue of Four Prentices. It is to be suspected that there were other inventory

lists that have not survived.

One other hint as to the disposition of weapons in on-stage military groups survives in an illustration from another country, in another type of production, and in a different type--but contemporary and nearby--theatre. On May 5, 1609, there was a show given in Amsterdam, the subject of which was the expulsion of the Tarquins from Rome. In the engraving based on a drawing of the performance,<sup>189</sup> there are several scenes illustrated in which a great variety of weapons appear to be on the stage at the same time. The reference to an on-stage army in III Henry VI as "the thornie Wood, Which . . . Must . . . be hew'ne vp" [V.iv.61] may reflect the appearance of the stage army, bristling with weapons, or it may merely reflect the author's vision of a real army.

Perhaps the only conclusion that can be made about the use of weapons in the representation of marching armies, is to fall back on what seems the obviously most likely practice. Each of the soldiers would undoubtedly have carried a sword and probably a dagger, and if the company owned any other weapons that were necessary for other plays in the repertoire, these were probably carried on as well.

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<sup>189</sup>Reproduced in Hodges, Globe Restored, 140-1.

This heterogeneity would have given the group of soldiers that marched on to the stage before a battle the appearance, in miniature, of a typical Elizabethan military company, for, as we have seen, they too were made up of a great variety of arms.

### Army Entrances

In most plays, the general manner in which a marching army set the scene before a battle was for it to march on to the stage, play a brief scene, and then to march off again. Sometimes--and this was popular with the Chamberlain's-King's Men--the opposing army would then march on and play a short scene. A variation of this would have one army march on and off, and then a scene in the opposing camp would be presented.<sup>190</sup>

Very often the two armies confront each other on the stage, but they almost never make their entrances simultaneously; the second group usually enters after the first has established itself.

The extreme rarity of scenes in which simultaneous entrances occur, may suggest a basic principle of army entrances. For the audience, the tiring house wall was

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<sup>190</sup>Cf. I Henry IV, Henry V.



a constantly changing edifice. Sometimes it was a town wall, sometimes it was a row of houses, and sometimes it was "invisible," with each door representing an outdoor roadway from somewhere else. In "crowd-scenes"--scenes that call for many people to come on to the stage at one time and to be represented as in the same location--(for example in city scenes of crowds at parades, insurrections, etc.), it is likely that all available entrances were used at once. The audience would imagine them as issuing forth from several doors of the same place. Therefore, when two separate armies came on to the stage as though from different places, it might have caused momentary confusion if they entered at the same time. After the identities of the opposing forces had once been established, separation would not be necessary: entrances that may be simultaneous occur in Selimus and in Lovesick King, but in each case only after both armies have already been seen. Even in these two instances, in which stage directions call for one army to enter at one door and one army to enter at another with no intervening dialogue, there may still have been some sort of activity on the part of the first army before the second entered.

Authors gave the audience a glimpse of one or both armies before most battles; even, in Antony and Cleopatra

and II If You Know Not Me, before sea battles. In Sophonisba, and before one battle in III Henry VI, the audience hears an army on the march, but does not see it. In II Troublesome Reign and Rape of Lucrece large groups of "Captains" take the stage briefly before the fighting, and establish in the dialogue that their armies are just out of sight, beyond the tiring house wall.

In the few instances in which battles are not preceded by marching armies, playwrights usually announce the on-coming fray with a messenger who brings word to people on the stage,<sup>191</sup> or with a Chorus (or "Presenter") who brings word to the audience.<sup>192</sup> With the exception of battle scenes at the beginning of plays, only one battle occurs without any preparation for the audience. It is the third battle in Wounds of Civil War, in which case the audience hears the sounds of battle and a character immediately enters and establishes the origin of the noise. Dumb shows, of course, go right to the heart of the matter and show the battle itself without any build-up except for an occasional introduction by a presenter of some kind.

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<sup>191</sup>III Henry VI, Wounds of Civil War.

<sup>192</sup>Caesar and Pompey, Battle of Alcasar, Henry V.

### Size of Armies

How large were the armies that marched on and across the stage? The ambiguity of stage directions, which invariably end with the phrase "and soldiers," leaves the answer conjectural. The only piece of real evidence we have about the phrase "and soldiers" is found in the "plot" to Seven Deadly Sins,<sup>193</sup> in which there are three actors assigned for "Drum and Coulers and soldiers." Greg assumed that this means soldiers bearing drum and colors, or that one person carries both and there are two soldiers. As has already been noted, the latter is most unlikely. It is quite possible, of course, that the "plot" listed only those men responsible for the handling of props. However there are no actors at all assigned for drum and colors in the "plots" for Tamar Cham and The Battle of Alcazar.

Thomas Platter, a Swiss visitor in 1599, wrote an account of his trip to a production of Julius Caesar:

Den 21 Septembris nach dem Imbissessen . . .  
bin ich mitt meiner gesellschaft vber dz wasser  
gefahren, haben in dem streuwinen Dachhaus die  
Tragedy vom ersten Keyser Julio Caesare mitt  
ohngefahr 15 personen sehen gar artlich agieren.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>193</sup>Greg, Dramatic Documents, I, B<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>194</sup>Quoted in E. S., II, 364.

The last phrase--translatable as "with at least" (or "about") "15 characters very prettily" (or "nicely") "performed" (or "acted")--has been interpreted as showing that there were only fifteen performers in the play.<sup>195</sup> It is difficult, however, to put too much stock in Platter's statement. There are 43 speaking parts in the play: a great deal of doubling must have been done, with some actors playing more than two parts. Unless Platter had followed the play very carefully with some kind of chart, it is very unlikely that he would have known how many different actors he was seeing. His statement might have been an approximation of major characters, or of the number of actors required for the speaking roles (without taking into account non-speaking performers), or it may even have been a critical judgement limited specifically to the characters "nicely acted."<sup>196</sup>

If there is no substantial direct evidence, it is still possible to piece together a few bits of circumstantial evidence and to make a suggestion or two about the size of "armies". It is generally accepted that the Elizabethan theatre was abundantly spectacular. Often,

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<sup>195</sup>See Nagler, Shakespeare's Stage, 7.

<sup>196</sup>Cf. Lawrence, "Practice of Doubling," 50-76.

suggested Chambers,<sup>197</sup> the spectacle was irrelevant or excessive and only loosely tied to the plot, and in general, every chance for spectacular display was met. Venezky related the extreme popularity of city pageants and parades to their many appearances in plays, and described the lavish and expensive mounting that such activity received at court, in the town, and in the theatre.<sup>198</sup>

Given a taste for spectacle and a love of parades, we can assume that the appearance of an army on the stage was used as an excuse for a certain amount of display. As Miss Venezky pointed out, it would require little acting ability to march in a parade, and therefore every available man in the theatre was probably put into service at such times.<sup>199</sup> She further developed this by pointing out that pageants and parades rarely occur at the beginning of a play, and this would have given stage keepers, collectors, and others time to finish their tasks and be ready to swell a procession. That such employees were used for processions and other scenes calling for large

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<sup>197</sup>E. S., I, 185.

<sup>198</sup>Pageantry on the Shakespearean Stage, Chapter I, passim.

<sup>199</sup>Ibid., 51.

groups can be seen in the lists appended to Greg's Dramatic Documents: gatherers played soldiers, and attendants played Lords in Frederick and Basilea, and quite a few "supers" are called for in one or two scenes in most of the "plots."<sup>200</sup> Stage-keepers as supers in battles are mentioned in the Prologue to Hannibal and Scipio, in which the author, Thomas Nabbes, took occasion to point out that he would spare the ladies in his audience the sight of battles portrayed "By the blue-coated Stage-keepers" [A<sub>3</sub><sup>V</sup>]. In John Tatham's Knavery in All Trades, written after the Restoration, a group of gentlemen talk of pre-war actors, and one man describes a fray involving Richard Fowler and "Some Mutes who stood for souldiers."<sup>201</sup> Even in the probably early play Clyomon and Clamydes there is a stage direction upon the entrance of Alexander and his army that calls for "as many souldiers as can". [359]

There were thirty to forty people engaged in the leading theatres,<sup>202</sup> and at one time the Red Bull may have

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<sup>200</sup>See also Lawrence, "Review" of Greg's Dramatic Documents, 222.

<sup>201</sup>Quoted in Bentley, J. C. S., II, 440

<sup>202</sup>Harbage, Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, 65.

had as many as twenty-one gatherers.<sup>203</sup> The largest number of 'actors' called for in the "plots" is thirty (in Tamar Cham and Seven Deadly Sins). Even thirty men would have made a good sized army on the stage, especially in plays wherein only one army marches forth before the battle. If thirty players were placed just a bit more than four feet apart and kept safely back from the edges of the stage, they would have more than filled the twenty-seven and a half by forty-three foot stage of the Fortune. Two armies, arranged with a space between them, could have been even closer together within the ranks.

This is, of course, mere conjecture, and reflects an attitude that sees the Elizabethan theatre as one of spectacle as well as poetry. At any rate "Enter Cade . . . with infinite numbers"<sup>204</sup> would seem to call for more than the "army of four or five symbolic soldiers" propounded by Nagler.<sup>205</sup> And even the "poetically" oriented critic G. Wilson Knight emphasized that the appearances of even short flashes of armies should be strongly dramatic.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>203</sup>Baldwin, "Posting Henslowe's Accounts," 62.

<sup>204</sup>II Henry VI, IV.ii.32.

<sup>205</sup>Shakespeare's Stage, 33.

<sup>206</sup>Principles of Shakespearean Production, 30-31.

### Pre-Battle Orations

When an army is on the stage the dialogue deals, of course, with the oncoming fray, and often the leader of the troops gives an address to his men in order to inspire them to fight well and hard. Such a speech, or "Charge," could, of course, stir up the audience as well as the "soldiers," and is an excellent device for building suspense and excitement.

It did, however, have its roots in actual warfare. Machiavelli had advised, in his "General Rules of War," that men should never be conducted into the field without first confirming their minds,<sup>207</sup> and Elizabeth's generals were required to be good speakers for the express purpose of encouraging the men before and during battle.<sup>208</sup> In amplifying the importance of orations before battle, Sir Roger Williams told of the time when, in the Battle of Moberhay, the Spanish troops were afraid to fight and were "encouraged to charge resolutlie, by the Oration of Santia de vela."<sup>209</sup>

The most famous pre-battle oration of the era, as

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<sup>207</sup>Machiavelli, 222-23.

<sup>208</sup>Jorgensen, Shakespeare's Military World, 94-95.

<sup>209</sup>Brief Discourse, B<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>.



far as the English were concerned, was given by Queen Elizabeth herself. After the defeat of the Spanish Armada, invasion was still feared for a time, and the army was kept in readiness. During this period the Queen visited Leicester's command at Tilbury on August 8, and after reviewing the troops, gave the following address from horseback:

My loving people, we have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery. But I assure you, I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear. I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good will of my subjects: and therefore I am come amongst you, as you see, resolved, in the midst and heat of battle, to live or die amongst you all, to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and for my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust. I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe would dare to invade the borders of my realm; to which, rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field. I know already for your forwardness you have deserved rewards and crowns; and we do assure you, in the word of a prince, they shall be duly paid you.<sup>210</sup>

There are only a tiny handful of such speeches in the

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<sup>210</sup>Quoted in Neale, Queen Elizabeth, 297-8.

drama. None of them, however, take the tone that Elizabeth's did. Male leaders, at least, were expected to be at the forefront of their troops, and their dramatic counterparts had to find less feminine ways in which to inspire their followers. Freedom, country, and king are the staples of most addresses, several of which emphasize the necessity to establish and preserve both the reputation of the fighting men themselves, and, usually, of their nation. Truth and justice are invariably on the side of the speaker, as is God. Elizabeth's real-life promise of pay is reflected in the theatre only by villains: Wyatt promises his followers money--and throws in fame and freedom for self and country as an afterthought;<sup>211</sup> and although Catiline mentions glory, liberty, and the natural valor of his troops, the body of his speech is based on access to food.<sup>212</sup>

Queen Margaret, after she cheers on her battered troops with protestations about the valor of their captains, admits that the enemy is too black-hearted for there to be any alternative to battle.<sup>213</sup> A similar

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<sup>211</sup>Sir Thomas Wyatt, 435.

<sup>212</sup>Catiline, 538.

<sup>213</sup>III Henry VI, V.iv.

sentiment, even more bluntly put, appears in Christian Turn'd Turk, when the leader of one force tells his men that he sees no need to call up their valor, as the desperate situation would call it up even in the basest coward. [195]

In King Leir the rather brief charge to the troops is shared by two men [2396-2427]. In only four plays are the speeches for both sides given, and in three of them there seems to be some attempt to use these speeches dramatically to shed light on the characters that speak them. The most blatantly different characters are portrayed through the speeches of Richmond and Richard in the True Tragedy of Richard III: Richmond addresses his words to himself, bolstering his courage saying that he fights for right and to defend his country from the tyranny of a usurping tyrant; he ends with

Then forward Richmond, God and saint George, for me.  
Quisquam regna gaudit, O fallex bonum. [1865-1872]

Richard, on the other hand, speaks depreciatingly of his own comrades, refuses to call on God, speaks of the oncoming battle in personal terms rather than in the role of a representative leader (as Richmond had done), and closes with:

Sirs you that be resolute follow me, the rest  
go hang your selues. [1966-1982]

Shakespeare's Richmond and Richard are more subtly drawn: Richmond emphasises the villainy of the tyrant his men fight to overthrow, and Richard emphasises the baseness of the enemy; but one over-lying difference lies in the fact that the English Richmond addresses his "countrymen," whereas Richard speaks to his men of the foreign "stragglers" they are to meet.<sup>214</sup>

Although there is no battle scene in Catiline, all the preliminaries to one are present, including a pre-battle speech from each leader. One leader, the Roman Petreius, goes on at great length about how proud he is to be engaged in so fine a cause with such fine men, and about how they are not fighting for expansion, but to preserve their temples, fortunes, altars, fires, the souls of their loved wives and children, their parents' tombs, their rites, laws, liberty and, "briefly," for the safety of the world against unwanted and criminal men, all of whom are weak. The rebel Catiline tells his group that valiant men need no words to add to their virtue, and that their present hunger and want should be enough of a goad to inspire them.<sup>215</sup> In the only other scene in

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<sup>214</sup>Richard III, V.iii.

<sup>215</sup>Catiline, 527-538.

which the rallying speeches of both armies are presented, III Henry VI, so much has already been said on the stage about the relative claims and counter-claims of each side that only a quick send-off is given by the leaders.<sup>216</sup>

Far more popular in the theatre, although hardly representative of real military activity, were the speeches, threats, arguments, and general vocal give and take between opposing groups, either in the field or before the walls of a besieged town. In almost every scene in which two armies confront each other on the stage, some form of invective contention occurs, and the same is true in almost every assault scene.

### Parley

The usual procedure for arranging discussion between two opposing armies or between an army and the city fathers of an embattled town, is for one group to give a signal for parley. The signal is played on either a drum<sup>217</sup> or trumpet.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>216</sup>V.iv. Other brief comments on the role of orations in battle scenes are in Langsam, Martial Books, 56, and Campbell, Shakespeare's History Plays, 287-90.

<sup>217</sup>Cf. Four Prentices, 230; Shoemaker a Gentleman, F<sub>3</sub><sup>V</sup>; Lovesick King, 39; I Iron Age, 294.

<sup>218</sup>Cf. Edmund Ironside, 874; III Henry VI, V.i; Coriolanus, I.iv.

The OED defines parley as "conference" and does not record any use of the word as specifically identifying a sound, nor do the military books of the period refer to parley as a signal, per se. It appears in dialogue often, always as meaning "conference:" even the common phrases "signal to parley" or "sound a parley" imply the meaning "signal for a parley." Significantly, none of the major concordances show the word used in a way that can be established as meaning a "signal." It is therefore difficult to interpret stage directions that read "Sound a parley" or "Beat a parley." Although in most instances the circumstances and (usually) the dialogue identify the sound called for as a signal for a parley, the fact that the word parley, and not trumpet or drum, appears leads us to wonder if the word may have been used in the theatre to mean a particular sound. In Coriolanus, although the context of the scene makes it plain that a signal for parley is being given, the word parley is not used in the dialogue but is used in a stage direction: They Sound a Parley . . ." [I.iv.]. In II Henry VI [IV.viii], a stage direction reads "Sound a parley" in a scene in which the circumstances make such a sound rather a surprise, and in which the sound is not identified in the dialogue. In two plays by Heywood, parley appears unqualified in stage

directions: in I Iron Age, a line of dialogue by the leader of an on-stage army reads "Let our Drummes giue them parleance," and this is immediately followed by "A parlie." [294]; and in Brazen Age, after one army enters as before the walls of a city, a stage direction includes "A parlee." [223]

There are more than a dozen instances of parley in stage directions. It is difficult to assume, therefore, that in each case it is only a "literary" usage, deriving from an authorial direction. At the same time, there is no external evidence to show that the word had acquired a meaning in the theatre that it had nowhere else, and that an audience was expected to identify a particular drum or trumpet sound as a parley from purely theatre-going experience.

Miss Bradbrook once wrote that "the actual attack was often of far less importance than the parleys where insults were bandied and defiances hurled."<sup>219</sup> That this might seem to be the case to a reader of the plays is true: the arguments sometimes cover two or three pages of text and are usually followed by only a very brief stage direction dealing with combat. However, even a

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<sup>219</sup>Themes and Conventions, 25.

reader should realize that the more involved and exciting the pre-battle invective, the more the battle must live up to it. If the raison d'etre for these scenes was merely the argument we should expect fewer of them to culminate in fighting, but as it is, Harfleur is the only city to concede to the might of its opponent's words--and even it has been battered a bit before it does so. And no army does so.

Excessive talk at such a time hardly reflected good military practice. Machiavelli advised against open approach to a city and suggested that easy victory comes with surprise,<sup>220</sup> but few Elizabethan theatre generals forego the luxury of "Words before blows"<sup>221</sup> in order to insure easy victory. Even when troops sneak up on a city, as they do in King Lear, the leader gives a charge to his troops before the assault.

### The Confrontations of Armies

There are just short of fifty scenes in which two armies meet and confront on the stage. In about half of these scenes the groups immediately engage in greeting and argument. No suggestion is made that the groups are any

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<sup>220</sup>Art of War, 215.

<sup>221</sup>Julius Caesar, V.i.27.



more than the width of a stage apart.<sup>222</sup> In the other confrontation scenes, however, the authors rather ambitiously attempt to introduce some form of foreshortening into the picture. The two groups can see each other, can call across to each other in many cases, but in varying ways it is established that there is more than a stage-width between them. Foreshortening--hardly unusual on the Elizabethan stage--<sup>223</sup> is established in these cases in two ways, with dialogue and with stage movement.

The major device is dialogue which suggests that there is some distance between the armies. This is most commonly done by having members of each group talk among themselves for a short time, and to make reference to the other group. In Edward IV, for example, Falconbridge and his troops march on to the stage and converse a bit. Then the Lord Mayor, Recorder, Shore, and soldiers enter and speak about the first group:

Maior. See how rebellion can exalt itself . . .  
Rec. They think they can outlook our truer looks.  
Shore. Mark but the scornful eye of Falconbridge.

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<sup>222</sup>The Plot of Seven Deadly Sins includes what appears to be a confrontation: "Enter ferrex Crownd w<sup>th</sup> Drum and Coulers and soldiers one way . . . to them At a nother dore. Porrex and collors and soldie . . ." [Greg, Dramatic Documents, I, B<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>].

<sup>223</sup>See Chambers, E. S., III, 25, 33, 37, 41, etc.

Then one of Falconbridge's men speaks about the mayor's group:

Spi. How like a troop of rank overidden jades  
Yon bushy-bearded citizens appeare!

Capitaine, shall we goe challenge them to fight?  
[25-27]

A similar approach to the establishment of foreshortening is found in III Henry VI. Queen Margaret and an army are on stage and are informed that King Edward is approaching to fight. One of Margaret's group says, "Here pitch our battle. Hence we will not budge." Then King Edward, his two sons, and soldiers enter marching, and Edward says:

. . . yonder stands the thornie Wood,  
Which, by the Heauens assistance, and your strength,  
Must by the Roots be hew'ne vp.

Margaret then speaks to her men, concluding with:

And yonder is the Wolfe, that makes this spoyle.  
[V.iv.61-80]

Again, in Julius Caesar [V.i], Octavius, Antony, and their army march on. Brutus says, "They stand, and would haue parley," and Cassius tells Titinius to "Stand fast . . . we must out and talke."<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>224</sup>Similar development occurs in II Robin Hood [G<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>]; Trial of Chivalry (which opens with the entry of two armies); Four Prentices of London [243]; I Iron Age [293-4]; I Tamburlaine [84], I Jeronimo [324-29], and Lovesick King [F<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>].

Stand

The term stand, used above by Brutus, often appears in stage directions and dialogue at this point. It is never elaborated upon, probably because it was a familiar military word: the OED defines it as meaning "a halt (of moving troops) to give battle or repel an attack; especially in the phrase to make a stand." It is used in exactly this sense and form in Golden Age--a stage direction reads "Enter Enceladus leading his Army, Jupiter leading his. They make a stand." Enceladus proposes that the battle be decided by single combat, Jupiter agrees, and Enceladus says, "Two royall armies then on both sides stand, / To view this strange and dreadful Monomachy" [50]. The phrase also appears in Hoffman. One army, made up of "Stilt, and a rabble of poore souldiers," is on-stage. When they hear the enemy's approach they make "A scuruy march." Then

Enter with Drum, and Colours, [three men.]  
Captaine to leade the drum, the souldiers march  
and make a stand. [1125-1186]

Just as the two groups are about to hurl themselves at each other Hoffman "kneeles beeteene the Armies" [1125-1203]. In I Tamburlaine when an on-stage army hears the enemy's approach, one of the soldiers asks "shal we encounter them?" to which Tamburlaine answers "Keep all your stand-

ings, and stir not a foote, / My Selfe will bide the danger of the brunt," at which point the enemy army enters. [18]

It seems fairly clear from this and the examples to follow that stand was usually a call for the actors to align themselves along one side of the stage and to go through gestures of entrenchment.<sup>225</sup> Two "armies" would, of course, face each other from opposite sides of the stage.

There are quite a few examples of a stand used both to set the military atmosphere and to help establish foreshortening. In I Iron Age, is a scene in which an on-stage army decides to march on Troy. "In their march they are met by Vlysses and King Diomed, at which they make a stand." After a few lines of dialogue, the Trojan army enters, and the two armies comment about each other among themselves, mentioning various people they see on the other side.[292-4]. In Julius Caesar, in the confrontation cited above [V.i], Brutus' words "They stand, and would have parley" suggests a staging almost identical to

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<sup>225</sup>Stand was sometimes used to mean merely a lining up of troops. In Knight of the Burning Pestle, when Ralph wishes to view the on-stage "Company," he tells the Sergeant to "call a muster," at which the Sergeant calls "A stand" [V.ii]. In Sir Thomas Wyatt, Wyatt and soldiers enter, and Wyatt says, "Hold Drumme, stand Gentlemen, / Give the word along: stand, stand:" [435]; and in I Antonio and Mellida, eight men with petronels and one in armor make an entrance: "Beeing entred, they make a stand in diuided foyles." [223-4]

Heywood's. At the confrontation of the Romans and Goths in Shoemaker a Gentleman, the Roman legions are commanded "to troope close, and stand." [F<sub>3</sub><sup>V</sup>]; and in Lust's Dominion, just before the enemy marches on to the stage to confront the Spanish army, the Spanish king tells his men to "stand fair." [E<sub>5</sub><sup>r</sup>]<sup>226</sup>

Heywood gives us what is probably the most complicated example of a stand, in Four Prentices of London. The Sultan and his army enter, and the Sultan tells his men that they are about to fight a strong and worthy opponent. Then he deploys his men for the fray with such phrases as "Turnus, haue you the Rere-ward, I the battell," ending with:

Come let vs line our Pikes with Muskietiers,  
And so attend the Christians fatall charge.

Then "Enter marching. Robert [ others], Drumme and Souldiers." For about 50 lines of text, Robert disposes of his divisions, second division, rear-guard, etc., warning his men to "let vs looke our battell be well man'd." After

<sup>226</sup>There is a possibility in these cases, and in a few of the other occurrences of stand in dialogue, that it merely carried the connotation of an admonishment to "Stand fast and be ready to fight." This is, of course, the basis of the military meaning of the word and would always be present. But any such admonishment directed to an on-stage army would have automatically had a reaction from the army, even if it were only a halt in marching. This reaction would become a military stand. In other words, the military meaning would undoubtedly infiltrate even where it had not originally been thought of.

Robert's side seems to be well established, one of his men says of the Sultan's force "See where they stand for vs." [240-43]<sup>227</sup>

Array, or Ray, is sometimes used as a noun meaning much the same as stand, although the correct military usage of the noun meant either an arrangement in lines or ranks for marching [OED] or the various marching patterns themselves.<sup>228</sup> It appears in James IV: the Scottish army is on the stage, and at the approach of the enemy one leader says:

Let all our souldiers stand in battaile ray,  
For lo the English to their parley come.  
March ouer brauelie first the English hoste, the  
sword caried before the King by Percy. The Scottish  
on the other side, with all their pompe brauelie.  
[2404-8]

It also appears in the very early court play Horestes. Horestes' army is on the stage, and a stage direction reads, "Let Egistus enter & set hys men in a raye," at which

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<sup>227</sup>In the very stylized meeting of allegorical figures in Three Lords and Three Ladies of London [G<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup>], three Lords of London are onstage with their pages when three Spanish Lords and pages enter. The stage direction at this point reads "March once about the stage, then STAND and viewe the Lords of London, who shall martch towards them, and they giue backe, then the Lords of London Wheele about to their STANDING, and th'other come againe into their places." (Caps mine).

<sup>228</sup>Gerrard, Art of Warre, S<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup>.

Horestes instructs his men to "Kepe your araye." [D<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>]

Similar action occurs in Edmond Ironside, although neither stand nor ray is used. An army is on the stage, and its leader says, "Behold where [the enemy] comes marchinge bravely on." Two lines later a stage direction reads, "They march a longe the stage / one an other." The two groups argue for a short time, finally becoming so angry that swords are drawn and

They trayne theire souldio>  
the stage Edricus speake >

After a long speech by Edricus, "The Armies make towardes one an other when Edricus standinge betwene sayeth" that it would be better to resolve the fray in single combat [1783-1861]. In the dialogue of the aforementioned confrontation scene in III Henry VI, Shakespeare seems to call for a stand-like alignment: just before the second army enters, the leader of the on-stage force says "Here pitch our Battaille." [V.iv.61]

### The Confrontation of Armies--Several Related Digressions

#### II Henry IV

Shakespeare's II Henry IV includes a confrontation of armies, but the sequence [IV.i-ii] is clouded with several textual problems which raise questions about the

exact manner in which the two groups enter and arrange themselves.

Just after the beginning of the act, the rebel army meets with Prince John and his army for parley. There are, however, two versions of the staging: one in the 1600 Quarto, and one in the Folio.

The situation immediately preceding is as follows: at the beginning of the scene Prince John and his army are scarcely a mile away and coming "this way" in goodly form. The rebel leaders have agreed to meet John "In sight of Both our battles" and are awaiting word from Westmoreland, who has gone to make arrangements. The Quarto reads:

Now. Be it so, here is returnd my lord of Westmerland.  
Enter Westmerland.

West. The prince is here at hand, pleaseth your Lordship  
To meet his grace iust distance tweene our armies.  
Enter Prince Iohn and his armie.

Now. Your grace of York, in Gods name then set forward.

Bishop. Before, and greete his grace (my lord) we come.

Iohn You are well incountred here . . . [G<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]

If we accept this as it stands, we get this picture: The Archbishop, Hastings, Mowbray, a messenger, a captain, and others are aligned at one side of the stage.<sup>229</sup> Westmoreland enters, immediately preceding the entry of Prince

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<sup>229</sup>The "others" are suggested in the stand of "Here stand, my lords" [IV.1.3] at the entrance of the rebels.



John and his army who align themselves on the other side of the stage. Then Mowbray, Hastings, and the Archbishop step to the center from their side, Prince John steps to the center from his side and, with Westmoreland, converses with the rebels. (Identical staging occurs--without the Westmoreland style go-between--in Julius Caesar [V.1] and in Heywood's I Iron Age.)

The Folio uses the same material, but gives a different staging:

Mow. Be it so:

Heere is return'd my Lord of Westmerland.

Enter Westmerland.

West. The Prince is here at hand: pleaseth your Lordship To meet his Grace, iust distance 'twene our Armies?

Mow. Your Grace of Yorke, in heauen's name then forward.

Bish. Before, and greet his Grace (my Lord) we come.

Enter Prince Iohn.

Iohn. You are well encountred here . . . [gg<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>]

Here the rebels are aligned on the stage, Westmoreland enters to notify them of the approach of the Prince, they step forward to the center, and then Prince John enters and speaks to them. Although this text does not mention an army for John, his lines at the very end of the scene call for at least a few men to have entered with him. John's army either lines up immediately behind him or, as seems more likely, align themselves at the opposite side of the stage from the rebel army while John continues to the center.

With one major exception, modern editors reject both the Quarto and the Folio at this point, and conjecture a quite different--and theatrically awkward--staging. A typical version is this one:

Mowb. Be it so.  
 Here is returned my Lord of Westmoreland.  
[Re-enter Westmoreland.]  
 West. The Prince is here at hand. Pleaseth your lordship  
 To meet his Grace just distance 'tween our armies.  
 Mowb. Your Grace of York, in God's name, then, set forward.  
 Arch. Before, and meet His Grace. My lord, we come.  
[Exeunt.]  
 SCENE II. Another part of the forest.  
[Enter, from one side, Mowbray, attended; afterward,  
the Archbishop, Hastings, and others; from the other  
side, Prince John of Lancaster, and Westmoreland;  
officers, and others with them.]  
 Lanc. You are well encountered here, . . . 230

In this version the Rebel force (and Westmoreland) marches off the stage, and then marches right back on again, while the actor who plays Westmoreland dashes across the tiring house to enter on the other side with Prince John and his group. Then they all line up and talk.

The proponents of this staging feel that the Folio version is correct as far as it goes, but that the entrance of Prince John implies the beginning of a new scene. They therefore place an Exeunt before his entrance. The Quarto version is dismissed as the product of a mis-placed stage

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230 Harrison, Complete Works, 682.

direction ("Enter Prince Iohn . . .").<sup>231</sup> The reason for this dismissal is, of course, based on the assumption that a new scene begins here.

Two questions have to be dealt with separately. First, is there any real reason to assume that a new scene begins somewhere in this sequence? Second, is there any real reason to assume the authoritativeness of the Folio text over the Quarto text at this point?

As is noted in a footnote in the Variorum edition, Fleay and Reynolds were among those few who believed that there is no real reason to conjecture a scene break at all. They accepted the Folio version as complete. Dover Wilson's Cambridge edition (1946) is the only major text that presents the scene in this way. Those who assume a break here give no reasons, and it is therefore necessary to guess what they might be.

One would appear to be that the phrases "pleaseth your Lordship To meet his grace," ". . . then forward," and "Before, . . . we come" suggest the anticipation of an exit. For Capell and his immediate followers the content of these phrases alone were apparently evidence enough for a scene break. It should be noticed, however,

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<sup>231</sup>Greg, Shakespeare First Folio, 267.

that the concluding lines of this conjectured scene are not a couplet, whereas only one other blank verse scene in the play [IV.iv] does not end in a couplet--and there are 10 such scenes.

Modern editors might be influenced by another point. It was general prompt-book practice to center stage directions that begin new scenes,<sup>232</sup> and it is generally assumed that the basis for the Folio copy was a playhouse manuscript.<sup>233</sup> Inasmuch as "Enter Prince Iohn" is centered in the Folio, editors might assume that a new scene begins here. But there are three other centered stage directions that precede the entrance of Prince John, none of which could possibly be construed as beginning a new scene.<sup>234</sup>

But what about the Quarto? Bibliographers tell us that the stage direction "Enter Prince Iohn and his armie." is misplaced, and give no reason for telling us so. Greg appears to have based his argument on his assumption that

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<sup>232</sup>Greg, Editorial Problem, 34.

<sup>233</sup>See Play List.

<sup>234</sup>Centered stage directions in the Folio can also indicate that the compositor was using up space to compensate for inaccurate casting off of copy. There appears to be no reason to assume that such was the case here. Cf. Hinman, Printing and Proofreading of the First Folio, II, 97.

John's entry begins a new scene.<sup>235</sup>

There are three other misplaced stage directions in the Quarto: on  $C_3^R$ ,  $I_2^V$ , and  $L_1^R$ . In the first two instances a long line of text left insufficient space at the edge of the page, so the compositor placed the directions in an available bit of white space one line higher. There seems to be no discoverable reason for the misplacement of the third. All three, however, are misplaced only one line, whereas the entrance of Prince John, if it is misplaced, is the only one in the Quarto misplaced two lines. If the issue is to be solved by assuming that a compositor has made an error in the placement of a stage direction, there is ample reason to suspect the Folio. On this page [ $x_{gg}^{2^V}$ ] compositor C, after setting a column and a half, gave over setting type for the Folio. His work on the second column was continued for about 30 lines by compositor B, and then the column was completed by compositor A.<sup>236</sup> It is almost exactly in the middle of B's 30 lines that the discrepancy occurs. With such a shifting about of compositors, a misplaced stage direction could easily have gone unnoticed.

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<sup>235</sup>Editorial Problem, 176.

<sup>236</sup>Hinman, Printing and Proofreading of the First Folio, II, 97.

In the light of available evidence, then, the coin is weighted on the side of the Quarto. From the point of view of the audience, its staging is more easily grasped--each army lines up on the stage, and only then do the leaders step to the center for parley. The ambiguity in the Folio staging might confuse some people, but the Quarto scene is simple and symmetrical. Also unbalancing the coin is the fact that the only other similar scene we have by Shakespeare, the one in Julius Caesar, is handled in exactly the same way as this scene in the Quarto.

"They March About the Stage"--A Conjecture

In the above-mentioned confrontation in Edmond Ironside, one army is on the stage, and sees the opponent force marching toward them. There is no suggestion in the dialogue that they make any move toward the opponent; there is only the stage direction, "They march a longe the stage" [1785], after which the two groups are on the stage together. The use of the word "stage," and the fact that this text is prompt-copy, leads us to assume that the direction is closely related to the technical side of production, and that it may throw light on a heretofore unnoticed meaning for the common phrase "They March About (or Around) the Stage."

The phrase is generally thought to suggest a fore-shortening convention, and to represent travel from one place to another, either by the simple expedient of walking around the stage in a circle,<sup>237</sup> or by marching out one stage door, passing through the tiring house, and entering at another door.<sup>238</sup> But, there appears to be a strong likelihood that in the case of marching armies it at times had a different meaning.

It was standard military practice, and still is, for armies to move from one formation to another by formal maneuver: a marching army that has come to a halt moves from marching formation to a stand, not by a disorganized action, but by a predetermined set of movements in formation. One such movement, called a Caraguolo, is described in text and diagram in Gerrard's Art of War. [ $S_1^V$ ]

It is quite apparent that such a movement is intended in Edmond Ironside, and other occurrences can easily be interpreted in the same way. In Woodstock, for instance, there is a scene in which one army is on the stage, and word is brought that the enemy is approaching to do battle. The text (again prompt-copy) reads:

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<sup>237</sup>Chambers, E. S., III, 117.

<sup>238</sup>Rhodes, "First Folio and the Elizabethan Stage," 117.

york: ther dromes are neere, Iust heauen derect this  
deed & as o<sup>r</sup> cause deserves o<sup>r</sup> ffortunes speed.

Enter w<sup>th</sup> Drome & Cullours: The King Greene Busshy  
Baggott: Scroope / Lapoole and souldiers They march  
a bout (all. (2771-4)

The king says that he has come in an open manner for parliament. There is no suggestion anywhere in the dialogue that foreshortening is intended, or that the on-stage army is intended to move toward the King's force. The effect is rather of an adjustment by the on-stage army--in military fashion--for a confrontation, and then a readjustment by both armies upon the confrontation itself.

In Hoffman, in the sequence cited above, one army enters, and makes "a scuruy march," [1126] after which the enemy force enters and makes a stand. Again, nothing in the dialogue suggests that the on-stage group is intended to march toward the foe. Similarly, in Heywood's II Edward IV, a stage direction reads:

Enter certaine Noblemen and Soldiers, with drummes.  
They march about the stage. Then enter King Lewis  
and his traine . . . [108]

Even in the early Horestes, there is a suggestion of similar movement. Horestes and his army enter as though before the walls of a city and they "marcheth about the stage;" then Horestes sends one of his men to the wall of the city to signal for a parley.[C<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>]



It is very likely that stage armies would have copied the formal military movements of standard military practice, and that the phrase "they march about the stage" referred, in these cases at least, to the on-stage rearrangement of formation, complete with proper (or at least stage-proper) military shouts and drum effects.<sup>239</sup>

### The Foreshortening in Bosworth Field

Before going on to discuss the means used to establish different degrees of foreshortening between opposing armies, this is probably the best place to mention a related scene that appears to be unique in extant Elizabethan drama.

In the Bosworth Field sequence in Richard III there are two camps on the stage at the same time. They do not speak about each other or take any notice of each other. Foreshortening in its normally understood sense is not brought into play--the two groups are portrayed in their separate camps simultaneously, but they are entirely removed from each other and entirely uncognizant of each other. Shakespeare does not, however, place the two armies

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<sup>239</sup>This argument does not, of course, obviate the occasional use of the phrase for simple foreshortening effects such as are found in Romeo and Juliet [second Quarto, I. iv.113]; I Jeronimo [31]; and II If You Know Not Me [342].

on the stage at the same time--he removes all but one representative of one army before he brings on a group of soldiers from the other.<sup>240</sup> Although the scene is unique in Elizabethan drama, it has its roots in a much older tradition. A ninth century illustration in the Utrecht Psalter could easily serve as an illustration of it: it shows opposing tents with soldiers before them, with strong foreshortening between.<sup>241</sup>

#### Foreshortening and the Means for Establishing It

As has been discussed, it would seem that as general practice confronting armies went through some kind of activity designed to establish lines of battle on opposite sides of the stage. The activity consisted of marching about, training of soldiers about the stage, the drawing of swords, (and, we may assume, the brandishing of any other weapons carried by the soldiers,) and as will be elaborated upon, a certain amount of menacing recognition of each other.

Normally, when two armies are on the stage, they are shown as immediately aware of each other's presence, and they either immediately engage in conversation, or talk

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<sup>240</sup>Fusillo, "Tents on Bosworth Field," 193-4.

<sup>241</sup>Reproduced in McDowell, "Conventions of Medieval Art," 220-21.

about each other before they speak. (III Henry VI in fact, includes the only scene in which two such groups do not speak to each other at all.) It is through the dialogue that the degree of foreshortening is established.

In some instances the imagined distance is not too great--no more than shouting distance. After the great preparation for battle in Four Prentices, and the Christian army finally mentions the opposing group, "where they stand for vs," they call across to each other:

[Sultan]. Christians?

[Christians]. Pagans?

[Sultan]. Behold our Campe.

[Christians]. Soldan, suruey ours too. [243]

and then go on to brag of the size of their respective armies and to exchange threats. In Captain Thomas Stukely, one group opens its talk to the other with "O art thou there?" [ $K_3^r$ ]. In II Robin Hood, after the on-stage group has spoken about the entering opponents, one of them calls out, "Fitzwaters Nephew, Bruse, I see thee there" [ $G_2^r$ ]. Similar treatment is given in I Jeronimo--in which there is protracted discussion about who will fight whom [325-9]--and in Lovesick King [48]. These bits of dialogue give the impression of a distance great enough to make vision slightly difficult but close enough to permit interchange of shouted remarks.

Somewhat greater distance between the armies is sug-

gested when the groups either have to move closer to each other before they can speak, or to send representatives forth in order to talk. In I Iron Age, after the groups talk about each other for a few lines, one of the Trojans says:

Harke their Drums,  
Let our Drummes giue them parleance.  
A Parlie. Both Armies haue an enter-view  
[294]

and then the two groups engage in talk. In the confrontation scene in Edward IV, Falconbridge's man Spicing says:

Spi. Captaine, shall we goe challenge them to fight?  
Fal. Soft; giue me leaue; I will deuise with words  
To weaken and abash their fortitude.  
Rec. [on the opposite side of the stage]  
The bastard offers to come forth, my lord.  
Maïor. I am the man intend to answer him.  
Fal. Crosby!  
Maïor. Traitor!

and the Mayor and Falconbridge carry on an argument. During this argument, one of the Mayor's group shouts an insult to Falconbridge, who answers with "Et cetera! are you there?" [27-8]. The Julius Caesar [V.i] confrontation scene is almost identical: Octavius, Antony, and their army are on the stage:

March.

Drum. Enter Brutus, Cassius, & their Army.  
Bru. They stand, and would haue parley.  
Cassi. Stand fast Titinius, we must out and talke.  
Octa. Mark Antony, shall we giue sign of Battaille?  
Ant. No Caesar, we will answer on their Charge.

Make forth, the Generals would haue some words.  
Oct. Stirre not vntill the Signall.

and then the four leaders argue. In Edward III, after the two groups have met, parleyed, and decided to fight, one general gives a quite long rallying speech to his men while the other army is still on the stage. [ $F_1^I$ - $F_1^V$ ]

Somewhat less distance is presented in Shoemaker a Gentleman. Two armies enter, the Roman army is commanded by Dioclesian to make a stand, and the enemy general speaks:

Rod. The Romans are in sight, Drummes beate a parley.  
Diocle. Death blurre their parley, wee'le not answer  
 The thunder of their Drummes . . .

Dioclesian goes on to speak at length of the enemy, and then, without any perceptible transition, is soon addressing his remarks to the enemy. [ $F_2^V$ ]

Generally speaking, scenes of confrontation appear in plays from all periods, in adult and children's companies, and are written by a variety of authors. It is only a guess to say that Heywood and Shakespeare were more partial to such scenes than were other authors--there are more of their plays extant which contain battles than there are of other authors. At times foreshortening of some kind was established, but just as often it was not bothered with. It is probably safe to assume that in most of the cases in which two armies confronted each other for any length

of time, some form of a stand was established, whether called for or not.

### The Outcome of Confrontation

In all but a handful of these confrontation scenes--the exceptions are plays such as Antony and Cleopatra and Hoffman in which peace is made, or Valiant Welshman in which single combat decides the day--battle is the outcome. In about half the cases the groups begin fighting on the spot, and half the time the groups exeunt to an immediate off-stage battle. Again, neither date nor authorship appears to have anything to do with the way the scene is played.

When a playwright has placed two armies on opposite sides of the stage, and has portrayed them as armed, angry, and brought to the brink of fighting by the rhetoric of their leaders, it comes as a shock to find them charging, not across the stage at each other's throats, but out their respective doors. But in at least seventeen instances this is exactly what we find. The complete lack of homogeneity in these scenes leaves us without an immediate hint as to why they were played in this way. In two instances (Hector of Germany and I Jeronimo) tempers are so high that individual members of opposing groups

almost come to blows and have to be restrained and yet even they leave the stage only to dash right back on again to fight.

In four scenes (Selimus, Julius Caesar, I Jeronimo, and Edward III) one army leaves the stage first, the other plays a short scene, and then it exits--and the battle begins upon the exit. In I Troublesome Reign, III Henry VI, King John, Shoemaker a Gentleman, Woodstock, Locrine, Hector of Germany, and Lovesick King the armies exit simultaneously--and war begins. In Alphonsus of Aragon swords are drawn, one army flees before a blow is struck, and is pursued off the stage by the other group. In a very few scenes the authors give a line or two of dialogue to anticipate the exits in some way. The exiting Octavius Caesar, in Julius Caesar, challenges his opponents to "come to the field." In King John, just before the exit of the two armies, John says "Up higher to the plaine, where we'll set forth / In best appointment all our Regiments." At this the Bastard hurries his men out "to take aduantage of the field," and the opponent leader, Philip, agrees with "It shall be so, and at the other hill / Command the rest to stand." In Shoemaker a Gentleman one general gives the command "call up the Brittaines Souldiers / [that were] sent unto our aide, let 'em begin

the battel," just before his exeunt with his army--an army in which there seems to be no "Brittaine Souldiers" at the moment.<sup>242</sup>

The only other play in which there is even a suggestion of motivation for a dual exit is Hector of Germany. After the Bastard has stopped one of his men from coming to immediate sword point with one of the Palsgrave's men, the Palsgrave asks:

[Pals.] No Combat then will be accepted of [?]<sup>243</sup>  
Bastard. In general, with our powers in the opē field . . .  
 [D<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]

Such lines inserted into the script may help a scene look and play a little better, but they do not really give

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<sup>242</sup>A rather muddled instance that may also apply here is in Edward III. The unusual treatment of the confrontation, coupled with a lack of stage directions, clouds the issue. The armies of France and England are on the stage and have met in parley. Then the French king makes a very long speech to his army, during which time no notice is taken of the English force. After the speech, and after the French soldiers have shouted their enthusiasm for battle, the French King says "Now on this plaine of Cressie spred your selues. / And Edward when thou darest, begin the fight." To this Edward answers "We presently will meet thee" [F<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>]. No exit appears in the text, and it is conceivable that the French align themselves along their side of the stage, but there follows a long scene during which Edward prepares his men for battle and in which no notice is taken of the French. At the end of this sequence there is an exit, followed by "many French men flying." It may be then that the French army marched off the stage at the close of the French King's last speech, or they may have stood mute.

<sup>243</sup>The Palsgrave is suggesting that battle might be avoided, and the issue decided by single combat, as was occasionally done both in real life and in the theatre. See below, p. 427.



us any clue as to why the authors of these scenes chose to handle these scenes in what is really an awkward and quite anti-climactic manner.

In other scenes of this type there is not even lip service to "another place" for battle. The armies get just to the point of fight, and then a stage direction gets them off the stage, either one at a time or simultaneously.<sup>244</sup>

The first reaction to this problem might be to assume that in certain cases fashion dictated that the scenes be written this way. But these scenes appear in periods, theatres, and even plays in which there are immediate clashes of armies ranged on the stage.

An examination of the conventions associated with entrances and exits is of little help. Normally, characters do not exit and immediately re-enter for a fresh scene.<sup>245</sup> It was suggested by both Bradbrook<sup>246</sup> and Hargrave<sup>247</sup> that an empty stage occasioned by a general exit

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<sup>244</sup>In two plays in which there appears to be similar staging, I Troublesome Reign and another scene in Hector of Germany, there is reason to think that the stage directions may be in error. See below, pp. 306 & 322.

<sup>245</sup>Greg, First Folio, 292.

<sup>246</sup>Elizabethan Stage Conditions, 33.

<sup>247</sup>Theatre for Shakespeare, 55.

signaled a pause in the action. This has not been generally accepted,<sup>248</sup> but an empty stage is bound to suggest a break of some kind, even if the next scene follows immediately. Again, when a character or a group of characters exit by one door and re-enter by another after a short time lapse, a change of scene is usually effected,<sup>249</sup> but it is difficult to conceive of two groups of from eight to fifteen men each marching out of its respective entrance door, milling around each other in a trip across the tiring house in armor, with swords, pikes and other equipment, and then entering through the other's door--all to effect a change of scene.

One possibility presents itself. It was impossible for any company to place enough men on the stage to give perfectly the illusion of an army or of even a company. But they may have often used a trick that is still popular with many producers for the staging of crowd scenes. The few actors available may have entered to just within the door, with some standing in the frame. If then the leaders addressed their remarks to the soldiers in a way

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<sup>248</sup>Reynolds, Red Bull, 190.

<sup>249</sup>Reynolds, "Two Conventions," 35; Sprague, Shakespeare and the Audience, Chap. II, passim.

as to include an imagined off-stage group, the impression of a large army could be projected. The audience would get the impression that it was seeing a part of the army on the stage, and that beyond the tiring house wall was much more. In cases where the drum and/or colors did not come on to the stage the effect would be emphasized, for the normal military practice of placing the drum and ensign in the midst of the marching groups would further add to the feeling that the group of men was so large that the drum and colors were still in the distance--the drum could be heard, but was not yet in sight. If, however, the soldiers were then to march on to the stage, or across it, the effect would be destroyed. The most efficacious movement would be to take an about face and to exit. The illusion might not be completely destroyed in scenes in which the two groups clash, of course, but the character of the fray would be changed from battle to skirmish.

One major playwright, however, did not trouble us with the necessity for speculation. When Heywood put two armies on the stage simultaneously they did not exit before battle. They fought then and there.

## Conclusions

Only about forty of the over 140 battle scenes begin with two armies on-stage simultaneously. Most such scenes appear in plays that date generally from the 1590-1600 era; the majority of the few later plays are in Red Bull or Queen Anne's company plays. Foreshortening in some form or another appears in about half of them, and it still appears at the Red Bull as late as I Iron Age, written about 1612.<sup>250</sup>

This chapter has dealt with the activity that precedes battle scenes. We have seen that the most common method for setting the scene was to bring on one or both of the armies, and for them to comport themselves in military fashion, both in manner of movement and in the extensive use of military weapons and gear. Speech-making, both by leaders to their own men, and by leaders to their opponents, was popular.

A composite and fairly typical sequence would develop as follows. After the beating of a drum is heard, a group of soldiers with drum and ensign in their midst marches on in military formation. They are armed with swords, many carry a variety of other weapons, and there is a sprinkling

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<sup>250</sup>Chambers claimed that foreshortening was not used by the King's company very often [E. S., III, 117]. At least Julius Caesar and II Henry IV have to be considered as among the few instances.

of armor among them. The leaders talk amongst themselves and then one addresses the army with words of encouragement and inspiration. The entire army then exits, marching out of a door other than the entry door. A drum is heard again and another army marches on to the stage. It is armed and comports itself much like the first. The leaders speak about the oncoming fray, and then a messenger enters with word that the "enemy" is approaching. A leader gives a speech of encouragement to the army. The men cheer, and the drum of the first group is heard. The on-stage army marches in military formation into a position at right angles to the tiring house wall and along one side of the stage, where it goes through the motions of aligning and entrenching itself for battle. The first army enters again and entrenches itself on the opposite side of the stage. The groups speak about each other, and one leader instructs a drummer to give a signal to the other side. Then the leaders of each group march to the center of the stage and threaten each other while the opposing soldiers glower across the stage. War is decided upon, and the leaders return to their groups.

## CHAPTER III

### STAGE DIRECTIONS

In more than a few instances the interpretation of a particular scene depends on the meaning of one word. It is necessary, therefore, to examine the terms we find in battle scenes, and to treat them in isolation as theatrical jargon. The need for this will quickly become apparent, for in several cases words or phrases used in the theatre seem to have had meanings not recorded in OED, and in a few instances, words were used by playwrights in apparent ignorance of their contemporary meanings.

Unfortunately, we can make no strong division between sound cues and stage-directions for actor movement. In many cases a term had more than one meaning. This chapter, therefore, follows no real order except, occasionally, that of the order of greatest occurrence.

#### Alarum

The most common stage direction in scenes of battle, fights, and associated activity, is "Alarum." In the notes accumulated from the plays in this study, it appears over 260 times.

Originally, according to OED, the word was a call to arms: it was shouted as a signal for soldiers to arm. It does not seem to have been used this way in battle scenes, however; only one play presents alarum in a context in which it may have this meaning: in II Robin Hood two armies confront each other on the stage, and after argument in which it becomes apparent that neither side will give in, one of the leaders says, "Alarum then, with weapons will We scourge your desperate will" [ $H_3^R$ ]. As will be seen, however, alarum may have been used here in one of several other ways.

Eventually the word alarum, instead of itself being a call to arms, came to mean any signal, or call, to arms. In this sense it is fairly common in the dialogue of many plays. Just before battle, leaders often call for an alarum as a signal to begin the fighting. In I Jeronimo the cry is "Strike Alarum drum" [328-9], in Trial of Chivalry it is "Alarum Drums" [ $I_1^V$ ], in Golden Age it is "Alarum then for Greece and Helena" [295], and in Birth of Merlin it is "Trumpets sound alarm" [ $C_3^R$ ]. Many similar examples could be cited. Occasionally a stage direction uses the word in what appears to be this sense. Just before a battle in III Henry VI, for instance, one of the leaders calls out "give signal to the fight," at which point a

stage direction reads "Alarum" [V.iv.82-3]. The alarum in II Robin Hood was probably intended in this sense.

Among the military men of Elizabeth's day the word had come to mean a signal of almost any kind. In Pathway to Military Practice, Barnaby Rich uses it to mean a signal of greeting to friendly groups, a signal to commend other groups, a signal to arrange ambush, a signal to plant ordnance, a signal to make a discovery or to signify the strength of a group, a signal to friendly groups as to whereabouts, and a signal to friends that the group is engaged in some military activity. [ $I_3^{a-b}$ ]

When we examine theatrical stage directions proper, however, we find that the word is usually--but not certainly always--used as a cue for the production of a sound of some kind.

Often, as in several of the cases cited above, the sound is made by a drum and/or trumpet. There is critical disagreement about the use of these instruments for alarums: G. B. Harrison defined an alarum as a trumpet call to arms,<sup>1</sup> Jorgensen spoke of alarums as played only on the drum,<sup>2</sup> and E. W. Naylor wrote that alarums were played on drums

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<sup>1</sup>Complete Works, 180 f.

<sup>2</sup>Shakespeare's Military World, 1-35, passim.



except in the case of tournaments, when trumpets were used.<sup>3</sup> A brief examination of the plays shows all three writers to be wrong as far as the theatre was concerned.

Although trumpet alarums are comparatively rare, they do occur. The above mentioned call for one in Birth of Merlin [C<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>] is one example, and others are found in James IV [2438-42] and in sea fights in plays by Heywood--Fortune By Land and Sea [416] and I Fair Maid of the West [316]. Although Naylor was not correct when he wrote that trumpet alarums are found only in tournaments, he was correct in the association of the two. There is a trumpet "alarum" during the Ajax-Hector single combat in Troilus and Cressida [IV.v.112-17], one at the beginning of the Edgar-Edmund combat in King Lear [V.111.150], and one before the Peter-Horner duel in II Henry VI [II.111.95]. Even tournaments, however, did not limit themselves to trumpets alone. The Medieval tradition is reflected in a carving of a tournament on a miserere seat in Worcester Cathedral: two knights are charging toward each other, and on the right one man is blowing a trumpet and on the left another man plays a drum.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Shakespeare and Music, 160. Naylor seems to have come to this conclusion through his assumption that alarums were played on drums unless otherwise specified.

<sup>4</sup>Illustrated in Galpin, Old English Instruments of Music, plate 49.

Alarums in the theatre are occasionally played by trumpet and drum together. In Gosson's School of Abuse an apologist for Homer is likened to

some of those players, that come to the scaffold with drum and trumpet to profer skirmishe, and when they have sounded allarme . . . .<sup>5</sup>

Heywood, in An Apology For Actors writes of a group of players in the provinces who "presenting a battle on the stage with their drum and trumpets strooke vp a lowd allarme" [G<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]. Trumpet and Drum alarums are found in Antony and Cleopatra [IV.vii.1], II Tamburlaine [104], Edmond Ironside [954-63], and Bonduca [Hhhh<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>]. In Stukely, alarums are at least bolstered by bagpipes. [E<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>]

But, on and off the stage, it was the drum that was generally associated with the term alarum. In Fletcher's Island Princess, in a comment about the mother of a noisy, talkative son, someone says "Tis ten to one she eat a Drum, and was deliver'd of alarum" [2KK<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>]. A drum is invariably involved in prior action whenever "alarum" appears in a play as a call to battle, but where neither the direction nor the dialogue names an instrument.<sup>6</sup> The stage direction

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<sup>5</sup>Quoted in Chambers, E. S., IV, 203.

<sup>6</sup>For examples see Orlando Furioso [949-981], Hoffman [1185-1203], Rape of Lucrece [240-42], Golden Age [48, 74], Alphonsus of Aragon [1558, 1652], Trial of Chivalry [i<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>].

"Strike up alarum," such as is found all through Alphonsus of Aragon, would seem almost necessarily to apply to the use of a drum.<sup>7</sup>

Although the word was often used in its military sense of signal, it seems to have had another meaning that was indigenous to the theatre. Even when drums and/or trumpets are not involved in a sequence, and in sequences when their use seems unlikely, we find the word alarum being used in stage directions.

In Rape of Lucrece, for instance, it occurs in a stage direction during a scene depicting Horatio at the bridge. Horatio is on the stage, fighting back a group of soldiers who are trying to get by him and out of a stage door. Off-stage, Horatio's fellow soldiers have fled: there is no battle in progress, there is only the sound of "A noise of knocking downe the bridge". Then a stage direction reads "Alarum, and the falling of the Bridge" [243-4]. The use of "Alarum" here suggests something other than a drum or trumpet signal to battle.

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<sup>7</sup>Hosley ("Was There a Music Room in Shakespeare's Globe?") referred to off-stage alarums and marches as "music," which may mean that he considered alarums to have been played by more than one instrument. The inference is, however, that he gave the appellation "music" to alarum in order to have many examples of off-stage "music." At best, all but one of his examples call for only two instruments (the exception is a call for "musicke and a song")--such off-stage music would hardly require a room.

Again, in Silver Age, alarum occurs several times in circumstances that would make military drums and trumpets unlikely. A group of men and centaurs are at a banquet, and after too much to drink, a fight begins. The men beat the centaurs off the stage, after which a stage direction reads, "Alarme. Enter Iuno, with all the Centaurs." She speaks words of encouragement and they stay on the stage. Then the text reads, "Alarme. Enter to them Hercules, Theseus [and others] . . . Alarme. They fight." [142-3]

Another banquet scene by Heywood, this time in Golden Age, uses alarum in much the same way. Jupiter and his followers are banqueting as the guests of Lycaon and his followers. Tempers rise, swords are drawn, and then the text reads:

A confused fray, an alarme. Iupiter and the Epyriens beat off Lycaon and his followers . . .  
[Jupiter and his followers] Exeunt.  
Alarm, Lycaon makes head againe, and is beat off by Iupiter and the Epirians. [22-3]

Shortly after the Horatio scene in Rape of Lucrece a group of people are on the stage just before a battle begins. A stage direction reads "soft alarum," and the sound is identified by one of the group as the "skirmish . . . begun already twixt the horse." [247]

Here are four scenes in which it seems very likely that alarum was intended by Heywood to mean something

other than a drum and/or trumpet signal, and it is not difficult to guess that he meant it to be interpreted as a general assortment of off-stage noise that would signify the particular commotion mentioned in the plot. It is difficult to imagine the banquet scenes, especially, being played without some shouting on the part of the actors, and it is interesting to note in this connection that "shout" is never used in stage directions that apply to on-stage actors.<sup>8</sup> Further examination of alarum in stage directions will develop this point.

The customary position of the word is at the beginning of a stage direction that calls for the entrance of one or more actors on to an empty stage. Typical examples are:

Alarum within. Enter Balazet [and others] at one doore. Selimus [and others] at another.<sup>9</sup>

Strike vp alarum. Enter Flaminus at one doore, Alphonsus at an other, they fight.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>An off-stage shout is called for in Shoemaker a Gentleman: "Alarum: a shout within:" [G<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]: the first colon in this direction may imply that the latter part of the direction is a development of the Alarum. Cf. Stanley Wells, "Some Stage Directions in Shoemaker . . .," 337-38, for suggestions that certain stage directions in this play are the product of prompter's additions to authorial directions. Mr. Wells has privately transmitted to me his feeling that the Alarum here is a prompter's addition.

<sup>9</sup>Selimus, 571-2.

<sup>10</sup>Alphonsus of Aragon, 392.

Strike vp alarum. Enter Laelius, who seeing that his King is slaine, vpbraides Alphonsus . . .<sup>11</sup>

Alarum. Enter King Henry alone.<sup>12</sup>

Over two hundred similar examples could be cited.

In almost all the instances of this kind, it has either previously been established that a battle is taking place off-stage, or it is immediately so established in the dialogue, and the stage illusion is that the entering actors are coming from a fray of some kind. Here again we receive the impression that "alarum" is intended as the effect of the sounds of battle.

In the context of battle alarum could mean the sounds of battle, in the context of bridge-breaking it could be the sounds of excitement at the collapse, and in the context of house-bound brawls it could mean the shouts and murmurs of mobs gathering in the hallways. One other case bolsters the idea that it was often a cue for general off-stage clamor. At the beginning of Macbeth [I.ii] after the witches have left the stage, there is an "Alarum within:" Duncan and his army enter from one side, and a

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 401-2.

<sup>12</sup>III Henry VI, II.v.1.

bleeding sergeant enters from the other with news of the battle. In this case, however, the battle is one hundred miles away.<sup>13</sup>

It appears then that there were two major meanings for the word alarum in the theatre. It was used either to mean a signal before a battle--usually a signal given on the stage by a drum and/or trumpet--or much more often, as a cue to off-stage actors to produce a clamor of some kind.

The construction of a few stage directions, both in phraseology and punctuation, combined with the ambiguity of others, suggests the possibility of a third, somewhat different meaning--one in which an alarum is an activity rather than a sound.

Well down in the OED list of definitions of Alarm is: "A sudden or unexpected attack; necessitating a rush to arms; a surprise; an assault." Examples of this use are given from as early as 1587, in Holinshed, and it is also noted in the dialogue of Macbeth. Other playwrights seem to have been aware of this meaning. Marlowe, in I Tamburlaine, uses it in this sense:

And with a sodaine and an hot alarme  
Drive all their horses headlong down the hill [17]

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<sup>13</sup>See J. D. Wilson, Cambridge edition, Macbeth, 96.

and in Brewer's Lovesick King one character says "I flye to conquer in Wars rough Alarms." [1860]

Was the word ever used this way in stage directions? One possible instance appears in what may be a somewhat literary direction in Wounds of Civil War.<sup>14</sup> During an off-stage battle, a group of men on the stage are encouraged to join the fray. Then a stage direction reads "Exeunt to the Alarum" [370]. Lodge, envisioning the battle in his mind's eye, may have thought of it as an alarum of the type under discussion, and so have written the stage direction in this way.

Earlier in the same play a stage direction reads:

A great Alarum: let young Marius chase Pompey ouer the stage, and old Marius chase Lucretius: Then let enter three or fowre souldiers . . . and Scilla after them. [333]

The first reaction of an eye used to modern punctuation sees the colon after "A great Alarum" and wonders if the rest of the stage direction is an author's amplification of the phrase.

Another pair of stage directions which give the same impression is in Larum for London:

In the Alarum, Alua and Danila pursue Marques Hauurie, and Count Egmont furiously.

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<sup>14</sup>The stage directions in this play are generally authorial instructions to the actors. See Play List.



At this point the four men argue for a while and while they are still on the stage a stage direction reads:

The Alarum againe, and Champaigne is pursued in by Romero, Verdugo and Van End, where he is slaine: so is the Marques Haurie, and all engirting Count Egmont . . . [637-701]

A similar instance is in I Iron Age. Hector enters, beating Achilles' Myrmidons before him. Achilles enters, there are several lines of dialogue, and a stage direction reads "Alarum. Hector fals slayne by the Mermidons . . ." [322]. Here too, it is possible that alarum was intended to mean some kind of activity--in this case the fighting before the slaying.

Several instances in Shakespeare can be given similar interpretations. In I Henry VI the French army, having decided to raise the seige of Orleans, rushes off the stage to do battle, at which point a stage direction reads:

Exeunt. Here Alarum, they are beaten back by the English, with great losse. Enter [again the French.] [I.ii]

Another occurs in Coriolanus [I.iv]. At the beginning of the sequence, Martius and his Roman army are before the gates of Corioli, and are about to attack. The Volscian army enters as though from the city and, after Martius cheers on his men, a stage direction reads

Alarum, the Romans are beat back to their Trenches Enter Martius Cursing.

(The staging at this point is somewhat obscure, and will be further discussed below, but it would appear that some, at least, of the Roman soldiers are on the stage at this point, for Martius addresses them and cheers them to another attack.) The Volscian army is either on or re-enters, and then a stage direction reads:

Another Alarum, and Martius follows them to gates and is shut in.

Both of the alarums suggest, in the contexts, activity rather than sound.

None of these examples are anywhere near conclusive, of course, and even in the aggregate they can do no more than raise a slight question at this time.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps enough confusion is caused by two meanings of the term without strongly raising the possibility of a third, especially in light of the fact that alarum appears in stage directions almost 200 times without any hint as to how it is meant.

Occasionally alarum is used in the context of an assault scene, and at first glance we might therefore suspect a connection with the OED definition (quoted above)

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<sup>15</sup>In the second S.D. in Larum, and the S.D.'s in Iron Age and I Henry VI, especially, it is very likely that the term was intended to call for additional clamor during the fighting.

which included "an assault" as a meaning of the word. For the Military, assault was a term meaning an attack on the walls of a city.<sup>16</sup> In each case an army is on the stage, represented as being before the walls of a city. They prepare to attack, and the stage directions read as follows:

Alarum. Scale the walles.<sup>17</sup>

Allarum, beats them off the walles.<sup>18</sup>

Alarime, and they scale the walles.<sup>19</sup>

Alarime, Telamon first mounts the walles, the rest after.<sup>20</sup>

In each of these plays alarum is used somewhere else as an off-stage noise, so it seems fairly safe to assume that in each of these cases it is no more than the normal signal to battle.

An alarum, used as either a signal or an off-stage commotion, was not necessarily only a short burst of sound. Several instances occur in which an alarum continues for some length of time. In I Iron Age, there is a scene in which Hector exits from the upper stage, after which a stage direction reads "alarum," and then Hector

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<sup>16</sup>OED, see also caption to the illustration in Holinshed Chronicles, reproduced in Harrison, Complete Works, pl. 12.

<sup>17</sup>Selimus, 1200.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 2391.

<sup>19</sup>II Tamburlaine, 125.

<sup>20</sup>Brazen Age, 224.

enters on the lower stage. He has, we are told, killed five men in the interim [320]. This would seem ludicrous if the alarum--of no matter what it consisted--was very brief. In Guy of Warwick a sequence opens with the stage direction "Alarum," after which there is a long sequence including excursions, a chase, a fight, an escape and a capture. Then the King enters and says "Command these brawling drums to cease their noise." [G<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>]

Before we leave the discussion of alarum, we should examine two cases in which it appears twice in succession for no apparent reason. In I Henry VI a group of French soldiers prepare to attack the town before which they stand. The text reads:

Reig. . . .  
 Enter and cry, the Dolphin, presently,  
 And then doe execution on the Watch.  
Alarum.  
An Alarum. Talbot in an Excursion.  
 [III.ii]

The other instance appears in Rape of Lucrece. Horatio is standing before a stage door awaiting the assault of a group of soldiers who are on the stage. Two of the attackers speak before the assault: the text reads as follows:

Por. One man to face an host! . . .  
 Charge, charge.  
Aruns. Vpon them [sic] Souldiers. Alarum, Alarum.  
Enter in severall places, Sextus and Valerius above.  
 [243]

There are a host of possible explanations for these double entries. In Henry VI there may be a printing house error, the first alarum may signify a noisy exit and the second an off-stage continuation of the fray, or the first may represent a prompt copy anticipation of the second.<sup>21</sup> The appearance of the Rape of Lucrece duplication in all five editions of the play may or may not make a printing house error less likely. As was mentioned above, there is an off-stage sound effect depicting the destruction of a bridge during this scene and there is a possibility that a later alarum represented the falling of the bridge and the commotion coupled with it, so it may be that in this case one alarum refers to the on-stage assault on Horatio and the other to off-stage activity at the bridge.

With so many occurrences of the word in the course of four score plays, we might suspect that alarum sometimes represents little more than a neurasthenic stroke of the pen by the playwright. Whenever a battle was in the offing or in progress, and some sort of activity was demanded on or off the stage, it would have been quite easy for a playwright to pop Alarum into the margin of his script

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<sup>21</sup>Cairncross in I Henry VI, xvii, calls this the well-known phenomenon of an authorial stage direction being carried over into the margin to catch the eye of the prompter.

while he gave thought to the further development of the scene. He knew it would not be out of place, and he could assume that the actors would interpret it in some way that would fit the circumstances.

### Excursion

The greatest weakness in Bartlett's Concordance stems from the fact that it omits stage directions. It is just this omission, however, which draws attention to a rather surprising fact about the word Excursion: it does not once appear in the dialogue of any of Shakespeare's plays, nor in any of the poems, yet it frequently appears in the stage directions of nine of his plays.

Other concordances further establish that excursion does not appear in the dialogue of any of Marlowe's plays, nor in his poems, but it does appear in a stage direction in Edward II. And there are no instances of the word in Selimus, Lochrine, Edward III, Sir Thomas More, Contention, True Tragedy, Friar Bacon, Atheist's Tragedy, Revenger's Tragedy, Two Noble Kinsmen, or in any of the plays of Webster.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Bell, Concordance to the Apocrypha: and various un-published concordances on file at the Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham, England.

Ben Jonson used the word at least once.<sup>23</sup>

Excursion seems to have been a word rarely spoken on the stage. But it appears in the stage directions of at least thirty plays written between 1587 and 1613, and seems to have been a fairly common theatrical term: in III Henry VI it appears five times, and in I Henry VI it appears nine times.

The most likely explanation for the absence of the word in dialogue is that it was thought of in the profession as a bit of jargon inexplicable to the public. Such an argument could not be pressed too vigorously, however: it was not a new word--the OED cites it as early as the 1570's--and playwrights were not normally so careful to exclude theatrical terms from dialogue.

Although, as will be seen, there is more than ample evidence to show that there was a special theatrical meaning to the word, the OED does not include such a definition. Its first definition, and the one from which all its ensuing definitions stem, reads: "The action of running out; escape from confinement." The third definition, described as military usage, is: "An issuing forth against an enemy;

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<sup>23</sup>"No excursions upon words good doctor . . . to the question briefly." Epicoene. See Crawford, Concordance to Ben Jonson.

a sally, sortie, raid." The phrases "coming out," "going out," etc., are found in all the various shadings of the word.

As in the case of alarum, there is a certain amount of critical disagreement and ambiguity about the theatrical meaning of the term. Greg wrote that his first impression of the word was stage fighting, but that he did consider that it might mean off-stage noise.<sup>24</sup> Chambers, although he did not give a definition, per se, of the term, suggested that it was a general term for on-stage activity including duels, fights and pursuits of stragglers, and triumphant marches across the stage.<sup>25</sup> The epitome of indecision appears in the footnotes to G. E. Harrison's Complete Works: in it excursion is variously defined as: "indicates that a party of soldiers runs in and across the stage;" "men running to and fro, indicating the fury of battle;" "noises indicating the call to arms and battle;" "noises to indicate rapid movements in battle;" "rapid entrance and exits of soldiers to indicate a battle;" and in other ways.

It is difficult to guess why Greg and others included

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<sup>24</sup>Dramatic Documents, II, 120.

<sup>25</sup>Chambers, E. S., III, 53.



the possibility of sound effect or off-stage noise in their definitions of excursion. There is no external evidence to associate the word with a sound of any kind, and its use in stage directions gives, with one somewhat vague exception, no hint that it was ever thought of as a sound effect.

Alarum was a standard military term for a particular sound, whereas excursion was not a standard military term, and when it is occasionally found in contemporary works it is used as an activity of some kind, never as a sound. Alarum often appears in stage directions which read "alarums within," but excursion never appears in conjunction with "within," "off," "are heard," etc. Conversely, in fact, it usually appears in phrases which suggest that it is some kind of on-stage activity. Typical examples are the following: "After excursions, wherein the rebels are dispersed . . .," in I Edward IV [31]; "diuers excursions . . . Then an excursion berwixt [sic] Herbert and O Hanlon . . .," in Stukely [ $E_2^V$ ]; "Talbot in an Excursion [enters]," in I Henry VI [III.ii]; "Excursions, wherein Talbots Sonne is hemm'd about, and Talbot rescues him," in I Henry VI [IV.vi]; "excursions over the Stage," in Revenge of Bussy [118]; "Enter Thersites in excursion," in Troilus and Cressida [Folio, V.iv]; "Enter in an excrision Bastard,"

Saxon . . .," in Hector of Germany [D<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup>]; and "excursions of all," in Caesar and Pompey. [377]

As was noted above, whenever the stage is empty and alarum appears in a stage direction it is always followed by an entrance of one or more characters. In fourteen cases<sup>26</sup> in the plays under study stage directions read "alarum, excursions." It seems most likely that the same principle applies in such cases: the sound of an alarum precedes an entrance, and the excursion is the thing that enters. The structure of the stage directions in Trial of Chivalry, for example, bears this out. In the course of the play there are quite a few rather extensive stage directions which deal with on-stage activity. In most of them there is a similar pattern: the stage is empty, then there is a sound cue of some kind (usually alarum or retreat), and then explicit instructions as to the on-stage action--who shall chase whom, who run across, etc. One stage direction,<sup>27</sup> however, reads merely "Alarum Excursions." [I<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]

Another argument against the suggestion that excursion was a sound effect stems from the same fourteen stage direc-

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<sup>26</sup>Excluded from the previous discussion.

<sup>27</sup>The product of the other author? See Play List for arguments as to multiple authorship.

tions which read "alarum, excursions." If an alarum was usually an off-stage effect of battle, it is inconveivable that a second sound cue would have been required--or, indeed, it is difficult to think how the two sounds might have been differentiated by the audience.

There is, in truth, only one instance in which there is any reason to construe an excursion as a sound effect. It is found in the Troilus and Cressida "Plot," in a column which Greg thought was a column devoted to sound cues.<sup>28</sup>

The plot is divided into two columns. The left one, which Greg refers to as the "margin," is narrower than the right one, and appears, to Greg at least, to be made up of sound cues: it includes entries for "3. seuerall Tuckets," for two "retreats," six "alarums," and two "excursions." The right-hand, wider, column appears to deal with on-stage activity. Beginning at line 11 the sheet appears in somewhat the following form:

11.] Alar<ũ>	Excursion
	Priam: m <sup>r</sup> Jones
12.] Excursions	Enter Hector & [Antenor] Exeunt
13.] Exc<...>	Enter A< > <sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Greg, Dramatic Documents, I.

<sup>29</sup>Greg thought the space after the A in line 13 large enough only for "Ajax."

If we assume that the left-hand column is made up of sound cues, the action called for seems to be this: first there is the sound of an alarum (the assorted off-stage noises of battle), then there is an excursion (some sort of on-stage activity) which goes off the stage and the sound of which continues off-stage as Hector and Priam enter to play a scene. They leave the stage, there is another sound of an excursion, and then Ajax enters. Even this conjectured reconstruction, it should be noted, brings the excursion on to the stage before the sound of it is heard off the stage.

It may be, of course, that the left-hand column is not limited to sound cues. The general ambiguity of the term alarum, the possibility that retreat was not always a sound,<sup>30</sup> and the complete lack of any other evidence in stage directions or philologically that excursion was ever thought of as a sound, throws doubt on the assumption.

In general, the evidence clearly points to excursion as an on-stage activity of some kind. But what kind? Some appearances of the word in stage directions suggest that it is an activity in which characters enter, cross the stage, and then exit: "excursions over the stage,"

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<sup>30</sup>See below, p. 203.

in Revenge of Bussy [118]; "Excursions of all: the five kings driven over the stage," in Caesar and Pompey. [377]

Even though the 'excursions' themselves may travel across and off the stage, characters in them sometimes stay on the stage. In I Henry VI, a stage direction reads "Talbot in an Excursion" [III.ii], after which Talbot stays on the stage and speaks quite a few lines. Similarly, in Troilus and Cressida, a stage direction reads "Enter Thersites in excursion" [Folio, V.iv], and Thersites stays on the stage for a long scene. In Hector of Germany a stage direction reads "Enter in an excrision Bastard, Saxon, Mentz, and Trier" [D<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>]. These four stay on the stage to argue for a while, and then two of them fight. In the latter scene, the term excursion may have been meant to include only the four named, or, as is implied in the Talbot and Thersites examples, they may have been part of an activity that involved others.

In another scene in I Henry VI the staging is similar to the scenes just cited, and there is dialogue during the excursion:

Alarum: Excursions, wherein Talbots Sonne is hemm'd about, and Talbot rescues him.

Talb. Saint George, and Victory; fight, Souldiers, fight:  
The Regent hath with Talbot broke his word,  
And left vs to the rage of France his Sword.  
Where is Iohn Talbot? Pawse, and take thy breath,  
I gaue thee Life, and rescu'd thee from Death.

Iohn. O twice my Father, twice am I thy Sonne . . .  
[IV.vi]

At this point the fighting seems to move off, for Talbot and his son then engage in a long scene, at the end of which they exit to re-enter the fray. Again this seems to be an instance in which an excursion is an activity that comes on to the stage, which involves soldiers as well as Talbot and his son, at the end of which the soldiers (the excursion?) exit.

The latter excursion included a certain amount of fighting. There are other cases in which we are able to infer the activity in an excursion. In Stukely, for instance, a stage direction reads:

Exeunt Ambo: Alarum is sounded, diuers excursions, Stukly persues, shane Oneale, and Neale Mackener, And after a good pretty fight his Liefteannt and Auntient rescue Stuklie, and chace the Ireshe out. Then an excurtion berwixt Herbert and O Hanlon

[E<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>]

It is tempting to assume that the first "excurtion" is amplified in the directions which follow it, but it may be that the direction calls for several excursions, or activities which cross the stage, and which are followed by the Stukely-O'Neale-Mackener scene. The second "excurtion," involving Herbert and O'Hanlon, seems by elimination to include fighting. The words "persues" and "Chace" both appear in the stage direction, and if the excursion were only a chase or pursuit across and off the stage, we should expect those words to have been used again.

Another stage direction in which fighting is implied by the use of excursion is in I Edward IV. Spicing and a group of soldiers enter, having been sent to attack the gates of a city:

As he marches, thinking to enter Shore and his Soldiers issue forth and repulse him. After excursions, wherein the Rebels are dispersed, enter Maior, Recorder [31]

A similar use occurs in I Iron Age. The Greek and Roman armies have lined up across the stage from each other in a stand, and after threats are hurled, they meet in conflict. The text reads:

Dio. Shame you not great Lords  
To talke so long ouer your menacing swords?  
All Greeks. Alarme then for Greece and Helena.  
All Troians. As much for vs, for Troy and Mecuba.  
A great Alarme and excursions, after which, enter  
Hector and Paris. [295]

That fighting occurs in this scene is certain: the armies meet and fight as they exit. The "great alarme" is a long drum preliminary to the fray, and the actual clash of the armies is called for in "excursions."

There are many stage directions in which the syntax gives the impression that the word is explained or qualified by part of the direction. The first part of the Stukely direction quoted above was one such case. Another pair are in King Leir. They read:

Sound alarum: excursions. Mumford must chase Cambria away: then cease. Enter Cornwall . . . [2614-15]

Alarum, excursions, Mumford after them, and some halfe naked. [2506]

Similar directions occur each time excursion is used in Troublesome Reign:

Excursions. The Bastard chaseth Lymoges the Austrich Duke and maketh him leaue the Lyons skinne. [C<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>]

Excursions. The Bastard pursues Austria, and kills him. [E<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]

Excursions. Arthur, Constance, Lewes, hauing taken Q. Elianor prisoner. [E<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]

Excursions. Elianor is rescued by Iohn, and Arthur is taken prisoner. Exeunt . . . [E<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>]

In such cases it seems likely that the phrases after excursion or excursions are intended to point out the highlight of the activity, or perhaps the whole thing.

Admittedly, most of the preceding examples are far from conclusive. There is one set of circumstances, however, which gives us what seems to be a detailed description of an excursion. In the last act of III Henry VI a stage direction reads:

Alarum, Retreat, Excursions. Exeunt. [V.iv]

The reported version of the play, the True Tragedy,<sup>31</sup> has, at the same point in the plot, the following stage direction:

Alarmes to the Battaille, Yorke flies, then the Chambers be discharged. Then enter the King, Cla. Glo. and the rest, and make a great shout, and crie; For Yorke, for Yorke: and then the Queene is taken, the Prince, Oxford, and Sum. & then sound, & enter all againe. [H<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]

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<sup>31</sup>See Play List.



The stage directions parallel each other perfectly. What undoubtedly happened was this: when he wrote the play, Shakespeare (or perhaps the original stage-keeper) wrote the words "Alarum, Retreat, Excursions. Exeunt," and when the actors (or whoever it was) came to reconstruct the play (no one having memorized, even faultily, the stage directions), they wrote out a description of what took place on the stage at that point. The excursion part of the stage direction, then, includes the entrance of the King and his group, their shouting, and the taking of prisoners.

There remains the most famous--by implication--excursion of them all. In Chorus' speech, in the Prologue to the fourth act of Henry V, he speaks of

foure or fiue most vile and ragged foyles,  
 (Right ill dispos'd in brawle ridiculous).  
 [IV. Prol. 50-1]

It is difficult to pick up a work on Elizabethan staging that does not quote these lines. They have been used in almost every connection from proof of an increasing boredom toward History plays on the part of Shakespeare, to arguments about realism versus conventionalism on the stage. But no one seems to have made any attempt to identify the particular scene in which the ragged foils are ridiculously disposed.

Cursory examination of the play would give the impression that no such scene, in fact, does exist. Armies shuttle about the stage, glimpses of the English are followed by glimpses of the French, but when the battle begins the only part of the fray that actually occurs before our eyes is the meeting of Pistol and a French soldier. However, just after the exit of King Henry and his army to do battle, a stage direction reads "Alarum. Excursions." [IV.iv]

I have already expressed my feeling that Chorus' lines are not to be taken at all literally, but as dramatic understatement, but no matter how the lines may be interpreted it is most unlikely that Shakespeare would "apologize" for a scene that did not exist. Here then, in the word "Excursions," are the ragged foils in brawl ridiculous: here, in the word "Excursions," is the Battle of Agincourt.

As we have seen, an Excursion was some sort of on-stage activity that occurred in the context of battle: sometimes it was an entrance, a chase, and an exit of two characters; sometimes it was the same activity played by quite a few characters; sometimes it was a scene which involved several activities--shouting, the taking of prisoners, chases; and sometimes it was on-stage fighting. It may have lasted a few seconds or a few minutes. It seems not to have been a sound effect. Beyond that we

cannot, at present, go without moving into the realm of guess-work and subjective interpretation.

Modern producers are not likely to be too deterred by such comparatively negative evidence. The only hint for on-stage battle in Richard III is the word "excursions" which accompanies Catesby's entrance before the famous "A horse, a horse" lines [V.iv]. In at least a dozen professional productions of the play in the last decade, not one of the producers has been content to let a few men run across the stage. He has filled the stage with every available actor, super, and extra, and engaged them in as noisy and lengthy a battle as his conditions and budget would allow.

### Skirmish

Although skirmish was not used in stage directions nearly so much as was excursion, it was closely associated with stage battles. In 1579, Stephen Gosson wrote of "those players, that come to the scaffold with drum and trumpet to profer skirmishe, and when they haue sounded allarme, off go the peeces to encounter a shadow, or conquere a paper monster."<sup>32</sup> In The Knight of the Burning

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<sup>32</sup>Quoted in Chambers, E. S., IV, 203.

Pestle, the Wife, calling for a scene to be played, requests Ralph to call an army together, to march and to prepare themselves for battle, "and then skirmish" [I<sub>3</sub><sup>V</sup>]. In his Pleasant Notes Upon Don Quixote (published in 1654, but undoubtedly referring to, and perhaps written in an earlier period), Edmond Gayton wrote of playhouses which on holidays especially, presented "some tearing Tragaedy full of fights and skirmishes . . ." in which the players make a bloody catastrophe amongst themselves.<sup>33</sup> Saint-Amant, describing the excitement of a battle in a London theatre, wrote:

L'une voyant l'escarmouche  
En redoute le progres;<sup>34</sup>

The OED defines the word as "An irregular engagement between two small bodies of troops, esp. detached or outlying portions of opposing armies." Gerrard, in his military treatise, the Art of Warre, usually used it this way--most often as the outcome of a raid--but he also occasionally used it loosely as a term for full scale battle.<sup>35</sup>

As in other cases, theatre practitioners appear to have been either ignorant of the specific military meaning of skirmish, or to have ignored it.

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<sup>33</sup>Quoted in Bentley, J. C. S., II, 690-1.

<sup>34</sup>Jusserand, Shakespeare in France, 128.

<sup>35</sup>Gerrard, Art of Warre, Q<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>-S<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>.

The dozen or so instances of the word in stage directions do not, however, permit more than a few general conclusions about theatrical usage. For the most part, the evidence points to its being used to designate actual fighting activity. For instance, in the Battle of Alcazar, a scene begins with a Presenter who tells the audience to give ear to the way in which battle begins, and who then exits. Then a stage direction (thought by Greg to be from the actors' abridgement) reads:

Alarums within, let the chambers be discharged, then enter to the battell, and the Moores flie.  
Skirmish still, then enter Abdilmelec in his chaire . . .  
 [1300-03]

What appears to happen here is that, after the alarum and sound of the chambers, two armies enter, confront each other, perhaps fight, and one chases the other off. The sound of the fighting carries on off-stage, and then it ceases ("Skirmish still"). As the scene progresses, Abdilmelic dies, and a stage direction immediately afterward reads:

A long skirmidge, and then enter his brother.  
 [1336-37]

In this case too, the word appears to signify the sound, at least, of battle.

Similarly, an authorial stage direction for a battle in Edward I, by Peele, reads:

Alarum a charge after long skirmishe assault florishe.  
[2459]

Whether or not any or all of this stage direction called for on-stage activity, it is apparent that "skirmishe" is here used loosely to mean fighting, rather than in any narrower military sense. The same is true of two authorial stage directions in Wounds of Civil War: the first, after a group of Romans have exited to meet the oncoming invaders, reads:

A great skirmish in Rome and long, some slaine.  
At last enter Scilla triumphant . . . [1933-34]

and the second reads:

Alarum skirmish a retreat, enter young Marius [2072]

In the dialogue of Locrine, skirmish is used in reference to the fighting that takes place during a battle: the leader of one army instructs his son to hide when the battle begins, and to come out at the backs of the enemy "when the skirmish increases." [773]

Barnaby Barnes, in Devil's Charter, calls for "a little skirmish within" [1002]; and a stage direction in Wounds of Civil War calls for "a little skirmish" [2119]. If Barnes and Lodge had thought of a skirmish as a fractional part of a battle, it seems unlikely that the use of "little" would have occurred to them.

In several of the preceding instances there is a

question of whether skirmish is intended as an off-stage sound or an on-stage activity. Several instances exist in which the term is used in the undoubted context of on-stage activity.

In I Henry VI, for example, there is a fight between two groups of men. A stage direction refers to it as a "hurly-burly." During the fight, the Mayor enters and stops the fighting momentarily. Then a stage direction reads, "Here they Skirmish againe." and the mayor's officers are forced to stop the fighting. [I.ii]

In II Robin Hood an on-stage skirmish occurs during a battle scene. Oxford, a hastily gathered force of men, the Queen, and the captured Matilda are on the stage, when word is brought that the enemy is approaching. The probably authorial text reads:

Oxford. . . . helpe me holy God,  
The foe is come, and we are out of ranke.  
Skirmish: Queene taken, Matilda rescued.  
Enter old Bruse wounded, led by his sonne and  
Lester. [G<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>]

The action intended is fairly obvious: Young and Old Bruse and their soldiers enter and confront the waiting Oxford and his men, a fight takes place, and the action leaves the stage.

There is some question as to why the authors did not use the term "fight" (as they had done in the preceding

stage directions). The construction of the latter stage direction is strikingly similar to many in which excursion occurs, and we are led to wonder if this might be an instance in which skirmish was used by Chettle and/or Munday in the same way as other playwrights used excursion. I shall return to this point shortly.

Skirmish appears during a rather problematical sequence in I Henry VI, and inasmuch as the staging in this scene has never been satisfactorily explained, and skirmish is one of the key terms in the problem, it is worthwhile to make an extended examination of the sequence.

The fifth scene of Act I opens with a few general chases across the stage, ending in a confrontation between La Pucelle and Talbot. They fight, then Pucelle breaks off and tells Talbot that she must leave him for other matters. A stage direction reads, "A short Alarum: then enter the Towne with Souldiers." This is followed, however, by four more lines of dialogue addressed to Talbot by Pucelle, after which a stage direction reads "Exit." Then Talbot, apparently alone on the stage, speaks a few lines. A stage direction calls for "A short Alarum," and Talbot suddenly appears to be addressing his men: the text reads:

Hearke countreyemen, eyther renew the fight  
Or teare the Lyons out of Englands Coat;  
Renounce your Soyle, giue Sheepe in Lyons stead:



Sheepe run not halfe so trecherous from the Wolfe . . .  
As you flye from your oft-subdued slaues.

Alarum. Here another Skirmish.

It will not be, retyre into your Trenches: . . .  
Puzel is entred into Orleance,  
In spite of vs; or ought that we could doe . . .

Exit Talbot.

Alarum. Retreat. Flourish.

That this is open to several interpretations is apparent. Chambers<sup>36</sup> has gone so far as to suggest that some sort of right angled wall may have been wheeled on to the stage for this scene in order to enable Pucelle to speak from "within the town." Such a conjecture raises a question of economics, however; it seems unlikely that a wall would be carried forth and put into position merely to enable Pucelle to speak four lines that could have been just as well spoken before her entry into the town. At any rate, certain other questions are unanswered even by a wall at this point. Where, especially in relation to the fighting that is apparently in progress, is Talbot? Is he perhaps peering in through the city gates at all this and making comments on action that he, but not the audience, can see? Or is there some sort of activity suggested in the dialogue that is not mentioned in the stage directions?

Shakespeare wrote a similar scene in Coriolanus [I.iv], in which an army is established at the walls of a city, and

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<sup>36</sup>E. S., III, 97.

it may include several hints about the problem here. The defending army issues forth from the city and beats the attackers back to their trenches (a word common to both scenes). Then Martius, the leader of the attacking force, enters the city, and is later beaten back on to the stage. With these hints, and the context of the situation in I Henry VI, it is possible to stage the latter without any alteration to the Folio text. Part of the English force is within the city, and when Pucelle and her force go into the city they presumably come into (off-stage) conflict. Talbot, depicted as without the city walls, is alone on the stage briefly, and then the "gates" open to reveal the English force being beaten from the city by the French. Talbot cheers them on, there is a skirmish on the stage, and the English are beaten back further across the stage, to their "trenches."<sup>37</sup> The French return through the "gates" of the city, and Talbot and his defeated force regroup themselves and exit through another stage door, after which Pucelle and her soldiers enter above to proclaim victory.

This rather straightforward staging shows skirmish being used as on-stage fighting. Shakespeare again used

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<sup>37</sup>Perhaps a stand-like alignment at the side of the stage; perhaps, as suggested by Saunders, "Vaulting the Rails," 81, even off the edge of the stage. The latter is less likely in light of the ensuing exit.

skirmish for on-stage fighting in Cymbeline, in which a probably authorial stage direction reads:

Then enter againe in Skirmish Iachimo and Posthumus:  
he vanquisheth and disarmeth Iachimo . . . [V.ii]

The difference in meaning between excursion and skirmish, although not great, is fairly distinct. An excursion is an on-stage activity involving battle activity but which may or may not include fighting, and a skirmish may be either a sound effect or an on-stage activity, but it always refers to fighting.

As suggested earlier, there is a possibility that the two words may not have been always so carefully differentiated. There are only two plays in which both terms appear in stage directions, and both may be of multiple authorship: II Robin Hood, by Chettle and Munday, and I Henry VI, a play attributed to several hands by a great many critics. Further, in King Leir, one of the invaders of a town complains "Here shall we skirmish with but naked men" [2471], whereas the stage directions which immediately follow this read:

Alarum, with men and women halfe naked. [2476]

and

Alarum, excursions, Mumford after them, and some  
halfe naked. [2506]

Although the word does not appear in stage directions often enough for any real conclusions to be drawn, in the majority of cases it is used by University men: Lodge (three times in Wounds of Civil War), Peele (once in Edward I, and twice in Battle of Alcasar), the author of Locrine (generally thought to be a University wit), and Barnaby Barnes (in Devil's Charter).

### Battle or Battell

In Famous Victories is a scene in which an on-stage army marches off as though to meet the foe in battle. Then there is a stage direction for the enemy's battle-cry: "crie within." At this point the words "The Battell" appear centered on a line by themselves. Then the victorious army enters [ $F_1^r$ ]. Similarly, there is a scene in David and Bethsabe in which an on-stage army marches off to do battle, and a stage direction then reads "The battell, and Absalon hangs by the haire." [1536]

No hint is given in either case as to how we should interpret the term Battell. At first glance, these two stage directions seem to bear a resemblance to such probably authorial directions as "Heere the Lady sings a Welsh song,"<sup>38</sup> and "Exent Bacon to bring in the shewes as

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<sup>38</sup>I Henry IV, III.i. (Folio).

you knowe;<sup>39</sup> directions for activity which either the playwright was unwilling (or unable) to write, or with which the actors were already familiar.<sup>40</sup> In the case of Famous Victories the latter possibility seems especially likely, inasmuch as the text is thought to be a memorial reconstruction on the part of the actors.<sup>41</sup> There is no hint in either text as to whether the activity was on or off the stage.

Battle sometimes refers to specifically on-stage activity. In True Tragedy of Richard III, after an on-stage army has exited to battle, a stage direction (in the "reported" text) reads: "The battell enters, Richard wounded . . ." [1984]. A perhaps slightly literary use of the term appears in Lust's Dominion: two armies are on the stage, and a stage direction reads "Alarum, and a Battail, the Moor prevails: All Exeunt" [E<sub>5</sub><sup>r</sup>]. A similarly literary tone occurs in I Iron Age, in which a stage direction dealing with two on-stage groups reads "Both Armies make ready to ioyne battaile . . ." [296]

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<sup>39</sup>John of Bordeaux, 446-7.

<sup>40</sup>Cf. Sir John Oldcastle, which opens with "In the fight, enter the Sheriffe . . ." [1].

<sup>41</sup>Kirschbaum, "Census of Bad Quartos," 33.

Battle also appears as a designation for off-stage activity. In I Tamburlaine, for instance, one group leaves the stage at the stage direction "To the Battaille" [26], and later in the play another group is instructed to "Enter to the Battell, & after the battell, enter Cosroe wounded . . ." [31]. Although it might be argued that these are literary-flavored directions, it is most likely that the term was meant to call for a sound effect, for later in the play there is a stage direction that reads "They sound the battell within . . ." [43]. In Battle of Alcazar, the text of which shows much evidence of theatrical sophistication,<sup>42</sup> a stage direction which appears when the stage is empty reads " . . . then enter to the battell, and the Moores flie " [1300-1].<sup>43</sup> In Antonio and Mellida [182], Bonduca [4H<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>], and Two Noble Kinsmen [3K<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>; 2nd Ser.]--the latter two in fine examples of prompt-book notation--"battle" is specifically mentioned as a sound of some kind. And in Edward III, a stage direction reads "The battell hard afarre off." [E<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>]

The methods used for producing the effect of off-

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<sup>42</sup>See Play List.

<sup>43</sup>There is a strong likelihood that this direction deals with an off-stage battle--see Assaults, below, p. 366.

stage battles and skirmishes are discussed in the next chapter.

Battle was also an old-fashioned military term for the main part of an army.<sup>44</sup> It occasionally appears in this sense in dialogue, but in stage directions in only two plays. In James the Fourth there is "Enter two battailes strongly fighting . . ." [655], and, in another sequence, ". . . both the battailes offer to meet . . ." [2442]. (The latter direction continues "& as the Kings are ioyning battaile . . ."--an example of inconsistency which makes conclusions difficult to draw.) In Golden Age the phrase "The battels ioyne" appears twice [48, 74].<sup>45</sup> The more current term, "mid-ward," does not appear in stage directions at all.

### Fight

The term Fight appears frequently in stage directions, as often in reference to group activity as to the contention of two individuals. In a very few instances weapons

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<sup>44</sup>The other parts being the Vanguard, or forward group, and the Rear-ward.

<sup>45</sup>"The battell enters" in True Trag. Richard III, might appear, out of context, to carry this meaning, but Richard's lines to his page make it quite apparent that his own major force is nowhere about. Shortly afterward, Richmond enters "to battell againe" [2001].

are specified: "Poleaxe" in Valiant Welshman [ $E_3^R$ ], "spits and pans" in Orlando Furioso [981], "weapons" in II Robin Hood [ $H_3^R$ ], and "swords" in Selimus [672] and in II Henry VI [V.ii.65]. In Travels of the Three English Brothers, there is a "fight" between two men in which one "beeing weaponlesse defends himselfe with stones" [ $D_4^V$ ], so it is not safe to assume that fight necessarily called for weapons of a standard type, although in the great amount of stage directions which call for men in either pairs or groups to fight, the context of battle would pre-suppose military weapons of some kind.

In Stukely a stage direction calls for "a good pretty fight" by two groups of men [ $E_2^V$ ]. In James IV a stage direction calls for two groups to "Enter . . . fighting" [655], and although there is no specific call in any play for men to exit fighting, the many scenes of fighting that end with an Exit or Exeunt, especially in the midst of battle, leaves little doubt that a fight could exit as well as enter.

### Beat

The term beat occasionally appears in stage directions during battles, in the sense of one man or group "beating" another off the stage. There is little doubt as to the



basic meaning of the term, but there is some cause for speculation about the means for beating. The term beat is, of course, a technical one in the jargon of fencing (although the OED does not record usage in this way until 1753), and there is something about the word, with its suggestion of repetitive blows with the flat of the hand or some other flat object, that makes it seem, to modern eyes at least, to relate most easily to the sword. In several cases the sword is specifically mentioned,<sup>46</sup> and in no cases are any other weapons called for or suggested in the text.

As with fight, there is no real evidence that would pinpoint the theatrical meaning of the term to any great degree.

### Assault

As early as 1297, according to OED, assault was used to mean the "sudden rush or charge of an attacking force against the walls of a city or fortress." In the sixteenth century, the Military used the word in the same sense,<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Selimus, 657 & 2420; Hector of Germany, D<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>; I Henry VI, I.iii; and probably Coriolanus, I.iv. (see lines 29 & 53).

<sup>47</sup>Roger Williams, Brief Discourse, D<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>-D<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>, et passim; Harrison, Complete Works, 98 and Plate 12.

and it seems to have been understood this way in the theatre. In almost all scenes in which there is an attack or projected attack upon the walls of a town, the word assault appears in the dialogue. A few examples:

. . . assault, the Cytie batter downe the walls . . .<sup>48</sup>

Bring the ladders forth, / Brauely assault . . .<sup>49</sup>

Let vs assault and scale this kingly Tower.<sup>50</sup>

The latter speech is followed by the stage direction "Assault, and they win the Tower." Later in the play, after an argument between a group on the lower stage and a group on the "walls," a stage direction reads "Alarum, excursions, assault, Exeunt omnes" [851], and it is safe to assume that assault carried the same meaning here. The word appears in I Edward IV, in identical circumstances: one army is before the gates of a city, there is argument between the forces below and the men on the walls, one of the men below shouts "Assault, Assault!", and a stage direction reads "Here there is a very fierie assault on all sides . . ." [20]

In most cases, however, the term assault does not

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<sup>48</sup>Edmond Ironside, 911.

<sup>49</sup>Humour Out of Breath, [H<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>].

<sup>50</sup>David and Bethsabe, 188.

appear in the stage direction that deals with the attack on the town, even though it has been used in the preceding dialogue. A variety of terms are used, most of them leaving little doubt as to the activity desired. In Edmond Ironside the stage direction reads "assayle the walls" [914], in Humour Out of Breath it reads "As they are scaling the walls . . ." [H<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>], in II Tamburlaine it reads "they scale the walls" [125], in Brasen Age it reads ". . . mounts the walles" [224], in Devil's Charter it reads "Caesar . . . entreth by scalado . . ." [2362-63], etc.

It would appear from this that although the actors and their audiences were familiar with the military meaning of the word, it was not associated with a set piece of stage business, and playwrights thought it necessary to use other terms in stage directions. A fuller discussion of the actual techniques of stage assaults is given in chapter five.

The more general meaning of the word--a violent attack of any kind--was not unknown to dramatists of the time. It appears in this way in one stage direction, although even here it is in the context of a scene dealing with an attack on the walls of a city. In Coriolanus [I.iv], in the scene in which Martius and his men attack and enter

the gates of Corioli, assault does not appear in the dialogue, but at the end of the scene, after Martius has entered the city alone, a stage direction reads "Enter Martius bleeding, assaulted by the Enemy."

### Charge

Charge was a standard military signal, and was cited by Barnaby Rich as one of the five major military drum calls.<sup>51</sup> The OED defines the military sense of the word as "A signal for the attack sounded on a trumpet or other instrument." It appears in stage directions as played on the trumpet<sup>52</sup> and on cornets.<sup>53</sup> In the first instance, there are other sound cues for cornet, so it would appear that some differentiation was made through the use of two instruments. In the latter play almost all the sound effects are made on the cornet.

Whether or not the audience and actors were able to differentiate a charge from other sound effects by sound alone cannot be answered. In several instances there would seem to be some doubt. In Four Prentices, for in-

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<sup>51</sup>Rich, Pathway to Military Practice, G<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>52</sup>Two Noble Kinsmen, 3K<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>, 2nd Ser.

<sup>53</sup>Sophonisba, 57.

stance, a character calls "A charge, a charge, rayle drummes," but the probably authorial stage direction that follows reads "Alarum" [244]. Again, in James IV, one character says ". . . now ttumpets [sic] sound a dreadful charge . . . ," but the stage direction that follows reads "Alarũ soũded." [2438-42]

In I Tamburlaine, a military leader is told to "giue your charge I say," and he gives a pre-battle rally speech to his troops [24]. This use of charge is not in the OED, nor does it appear in any other dialogue or stage direction in this study. Marlowe's most likely meaning was that of a 'mandate' or 'order,' which although not a military usage, is mentioned in OED.

### Flourish

It is generally assumed that Flourish is a sound effect of some kind. Under the sub-heading Music, the OED defines flourish as "A fanfare (of horns, trumpets, etc.), esp. to announce the approach of a person of distinction." In Shakespeare Music, Naylor gives an example of a sixteenth century flourish for either four trumpets alone or with drum [28]; it is a rather straightforward piece of music, beginning with a bit of triple-tonguing, then a few simple up and down arpeggios, more triple-tonguing, and a sustained final blast. Naylor elsewhere

noted 68 flourishes in 17 plays by Shakespeare, six times by trumpets and twice by cornets.<sup>54</sup> In Richard III, for example [IV.iv.158], Richard calls for "A flourish Trum-pets, strike Alarum Drummes," after which the stage direction in the "reported" Quarto reads "The trumpets," and in the Folio (derived from the Quarto, with perhaps recourse to the original manuscript marked for prompt use) reads "Flourish. Alarums." Again, in the prompt-copy-derived Folio text of Troilus and Cressida, a flourish is played by a trumpet. [IV.v.63]

Trumpet flourishes abound in stage directions. There is a cornet flourish in Coriolanus [I.x], and Marston called for cornet flourishes in the private theatre plays Antonio and Mellida [341, et passim] and Sophonisba [280]. There are drum and trumpet flourishes in Coriolanus [I.ix], Rape of Lucrece [240], Devil's Charter [73], and Lovesick King [44]. The drum alone seems to be responsible for flourishes in Shoemaker a Gentleman [D<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>] and in I Jeronimo. [325]

In the great majority of cases, flourish stands in a stage direction without an associated instrument. In most such cases it is apparent from the dialogue that it is a

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<sup>54</sup>Shakespeare and Music, 161.

sound of some kind. In a very few instances, however, when the word appears with no specific demand for a sound, or without anything in the dialogue to connect it to a sound, some question might be raised in reference to another definition found in OED. Just before the above-quoted definition there is one that reads "An ostentatious waving about of a weapon or anything else held in the hand . . ." (cited as early as 1601, in Cornwalllyes' Essays). Such an interpretation would, at first glance, seem to fit nicely into the context of battle scenes, and there are several instances in which it would be very easy to read such a meaning into the word in a stage direction. No evidence exists in any of the plays, however, that would substantiate this interpretation.

### Retreat

Retreat was a standard military signal. Barnaby Rich mentioned it as one of the five major signals in the repertoire of the drum,<sup>55</sup> and William Barriffe named it as one of the six drum signals with which every soldier should be familiar.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Rich, Pathway to Military Practice, G<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>56</sup>Jorgensen, Shakespeare's Military World, 317-18.

It appears fairly often in stage directions, occasionally by itself, but most often in conjunction with other terms--for example "Alarum, retreat, then enter Sir Anthonie . . .,"<sup>57</sup> and "Retreat. Excursions. Pucell, Alanson, and Charles flye."<sup>58</sup> Greg took it to mean a "particular blast on the trumpet"<sup>59</sup> and Naylor apparently assumed that it meant a trumpet call, for he wrote that the "actual notes of a retreat of Shakespeare's time are not known."<sup>60</sup>

Many retreats were, in fact, played on the trumpet. In Thracian Wonder, a stage direction reads "Tromp. Flor.", shortly after which an entering character says "Let the retreat we heard at our approach, call back your powers." At this point a stage direction reads "Tromp. Flor. Retreat" [G<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>]. Shakespeare three times identifies the trumpet with retreat.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Travels of the Three English Brothers, B<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>58</sup>I Henry VI, III.ii.

<sup>59</sup>Dramatic Documents, II. 81-2.

<sup>60</sup>Shakespeare and Music, 166.

<sup>61</sup>I Henry IV, V.iv.159, and Henry V, III.ii.92, and Troilus and Cressida, V.viii.15-16. A few lines later a stage direction reads "Sound Retreat. Shout" (Cowling, in Music on the Shakespearian Stage [45], although he cited no evidence, thought that "sound" always meant a trumpet call): there are a great many calls for the trumpet in the course of the play.



It is not correct, however, to say that all retreats were played on the trumpet. As we have seen, among the military it was normally a drum signal. After a stage battle in Edmond Ironside one character says "yo<sup>r</sup> Drumes reteate did Cause yo<sup>r</sup> forces flee" [1708]; in Trial of Chivalry, a stage direction "retreyt" is spoken of as a retreat sounded "by the faynt lāguage of your drums" [1<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>]; and in the Restoration play the Siege of Rhodes, by Davenant--a playwright who was writing plays before the theatres closed in 1642--one character calls

Arm, Arm! Let our Drums beat  
To all our Out-Guards, a Retreat. [A<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>]

It is possible that retreat was occasionally used by playwrights in a semi-literary way, to mean some sort of stage activity which involved fleeing soldiers. Such a use of the term would fit many of its appearances in stage directions, especially in sequences which immediately precede victorious entrances. However, only one piece of evidence exists to substantiate this idea, in the relationship between III Henry VI and the True Tragedy. In the set of parallel stage directions discussed above<sup>62</sup> the III Henry VI sequence reads

Alarum. Retreat. Excursions.

Exeunt. [V.iv],

and the comparable sequence in the True Tragedy reads

Alarmer to the Battaille, Yorke flies, then the Chambers be  
discharged. Then enter the King, Cla. Glo. and the  
rest . . . [H<sub>1</sub>r]

If, as has been suggested, the latter directions are a reported version of the play as produced, then the words "Yorke flies" may quite well stem from the "Retreat" of III Henry VI. They might just as well reflect an interpretation by the actors. In any case, the term so often appears in plays in which excursion is used as a general term for stage crosses of various kinds, and in which retreating groups are described in stage directions of their own (as in the flight of Pucelle, in I Henry VI), that it seems fairly safe to conclude that retreat was no more than an off-stage sound played by a trumpet or drum.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE BATTLES BEGIN

#### Pre-Play Battles

A few plays open with battles just finished. Alexander and Campaspe (1584) opens with prisoners being brought before the victorious Alexander, and Wars of Cyrus (1588) opens with a victorious army watching the fleeing enemy. Both of these early plays were in the repertory of the Children of the Chapel. King and No King (1611) opens with a war having just ended in single combat and the soldiers in the camp discussing the battle. There are no further battle scenes in these plays.

#### Beginnings--Sounds

In all but a handful of plays the first textual indication of a battle is a sound cue of some kind. It is usually preceded by the sound of marching soldiers, and therefore does not burst upon the silent air, but makes a segue. In almost three fourths of all battles, the sound cue is the word alarm. In Henry V [III. Prol.] and Battle of Alcazar [1300] the alarm is coupled with

the firing of chambers, in Fortune By Land and Sea it is coupled with "shot" [410], and in Antony and Cleopatra it is coupled with "the noise of a Sea fight" [III.x]. In I and II Tamburlaine the last three of many battles begin with the stage direction alarum, and the earlier ones begin with such phrases as "They sound to the battaile" [67], "Summon the Battell" [103], and "Sound trumpets to the battell" [27]--it seems likely that the earlier stage directions were intended to mean much the same as alarum. Similarly, the "Drums" which begin one battle in Edmond Ironside [1565] appears to mean the same as the alarums which start the other battles in the play.

Some battles begin with other sounds. Both battles in Sophonisba begin with a cornet charge [24, 57].<sup>1</sup> In Weakest Goeth to the Wall is "Sound Trumpet first" [1794], followed a few lines later, in the midst of the battle, with an alarum. In II If You Know Not Me, the defeat of the Spanish Armada begins with "A peal of Shot" [338]. In Christian Turned Turk [197] a group of mariners exit to battle shouting a battle cry--as do assaulters in I Henry VI [II.1]--no other sound effects are specifically mentioned in

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<sup>1</sup>As does the battle in Maid of Honor (1632), written in about 1621.

in the texts. Three groups enter "shouting" and fighting in Histrion-Mastix. [291]

Several battles begin with a somewhat generalized call for the sound of a "Battel." In I Tamburlaine is "They sound the battell within [43]. At this point in the play the interest is on a group of on-stage characters, and the sound cue seems to be intended to signify a complete phase of battle. All the other battles in the two parts of the play begin with alarums or comparable sounds, so it is probably that this one was intended to do so as well. In Edward III, a stage direction reads "The Battell hard afarre off" [ $E_3^r$ ]--we learn shortly afterward that the battle was at sea. Two other land battles in the play begin with alarums. Another such general direction deals with a sea-battle, in I Antonio and Mellida: it calls for the cornets to "sound a battle within" [182]. Cornets may have also been involved in a similar off-stage battle in Two Noble Kinsmen--Theseus and his lords prepare to leave for battle, and the text reads:

Exeunt.  
Cornets.

Scena Quarta.  
A Battel struck within:

[ $3H_3^r$ , 2nd. Ser.]

At the beginning of a sea-battle in Whore of Babylon there is "The Sea fight." [271]. The ensuing dialogue suggests

the firing of chambers, but there is no evidence that any particular sound began things.

In Caesar and Pompey, the Chorus enters and tells the audience that the battle has already begun. After he describes the beginnings of the conflict, a stage direction calls for an alarum, followed by the entrance of several participants. [II.iii]

Several military leaders call for noise, usually a drum, at the beginnings of battles. Typical of these demands are the following: in II Henry IV, Prince John calls "Strike vp our Drummes, pursue the scatter'd stray" at the beginning of the "mopping-up" exercise in the fourth act [IV.ii]; Tamburlaine says "strike vp Drum" just before he and his army "Enter to the Battel" [31]; just before an on-stage fray in II Robin Hood one leader says "sound drums to warre" [G<sub>2</sub><sup>V</sup>]; and before an on-stage battle in Four Prentices one man shouts "A charge, a charge, rayle drummes" [244]. In III Henry VI there is a call for the sounding of trumpets and drums before one engagement [II.i] and for trumpets before another [II.ii]. Macduff calls for trumpets--"Make all our Trumpets speak, giue thẽ all breath"--just before the battle in Macbeth [V.vi]. Battle cries<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>See below, p. 233.

are often shouted, and called for, by leaders as the fray begins, but whereas they seem usually to be part and parcel of the activity of battle, the above commands are orders for the signal that begins battle.

In only about a dozen plays do battles begin without calls for sound effects. Some of these are in scenes in which two on-stage groups engage in battle without an intermediate exit, and stage directions read merely "Let them fight," or "They fight,"<sup>3</sup> or (in assault scenes) in which an assault is called for.<sup>4</sup>

In scenes that begin with an empty stage and in which no sound effect is specified to open the battle, problems arise if we accept the texts as complete. Many scenes exist in which men, groups, or armies march off the stage as though going into battle, but in which the next scene is not one of battle. Unless, therefore, in sequences in which battle does occur, two armies charge on to the stage and clash, some means would have to be employed to let the audience know that a battle had begun. There are, of course, several scenes in which two armies do enter and

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<sup>3</sup>Lochrine, 797; Edward IV, 28.

<sup>4</sup>Edward IV, 20; David and Bethsabe, 222; Edmond Ironside, 914.

clash, but in all but one of these<sup>5</sup> an alarum precedes even this type of entrance. Unless actors on-stage were to turn to the audience and say "The battle has begun"--which none do--some sort of sound effect would be a necessity.

There is reason to assume that the few texts which omit such sound effects are merely incomplete. In Cymbeline, for instance (the text of which is thought to retain much of the foul papers in the battle sequences) the first sign of battle is the entrance of two men in skirmish immediately after two armies have marched across the stage. Although no sound cue is given at this point, a few lines later is the stage direction "The Battaille continues" [V.ii]. This implies that the sounds of battle have previously begun, as the off-stage manifestation of the skirmish, prior to its entrance.

There appears to be a similar omission in Edward II. As the text stands, no sound cues are given for the first battle until it is almost finished, when there is an alarum [342]. A later battle begins with an alarum. In King John, too, a battle is begun with merely excursions, but in later

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<sup>5</sup>True Tragedy of Richard III. And this text is not at all dependable: see Play List.



phases of the fray there are alarums. A few other battles begin immediately with excursions. Four such are in Troublesome Reign and one is in Stukely. The latter instance is in a very ambiguous piece of text, but in any case, inasmuch as an excursion is an activity that enters and crosses the stage, we can assume that the sounds began in the tiring house.

There remain three sequences in which battles develop without a sound cue at the beginning, nor anywhere in the sequence. One is in David and Bethsabe, in which the third battle is called for in its entirety by the stage direction "The battell" [1536]. Another is in Edward IV, in what is really the second phase of a battle: the first part is an assault (in which the text calls for a "very fierie assault") and then the action shifts off-stage as the assaulters go off to meet a new force [21]. Heywood gives no stage directions at all for this part of the battle. In Soliman and Perseda there is an "Exeunt to the battel" followed by a puzzling direction dealing with the death of two men--and no more [ $F_1^r$ ].<sup>6</sup>

With this dwelling on exceptions we should not lose sight of basic practice. Almost all battles begin with

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<sup>6</sup>A later, equally problematic battle scene begins with an alarum.

some kind of sound cue (most often by far an alarum), after which the physical manifestations of battle--if any--occur.

### Beginnings--Location

Four out of five battles begin out of sight of the audience. In most cases, on-stage characters have left the stage, leaving it momentarily empty,<sup>7</sup> when the first sounds are heard. In a few instances characters are on the stage, and they become aware of the out-of-sight fray in the same way that the audience does. The sounds that began battles must have been familiar ones, either through established convention or by reason of a comparative realism; for no playwright ever found it necessary to directly inform the audience of their meaning. Most entrances that follow the opening noises, in fact, assume complete understanding on the part of the audience. In almost all cases, of course, the context would be a great clarifier.

About 20% of all battles begin on the stage. Scenes in which the tiring house wall is assaulted necessarily begin on-stage, some--but not all--dumb-show battles do so, and in about half the sequences in which two armies confront each other before battle the action begins without

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<sup>7</sup>The significance of an empty stage is dealt with below, p. 267.

an exit. Most such beginnings occur in plays written before 1600--the few exceptions are in the King's men's plays I Jeronimo (1604), Devil's Charter (1607), and Coriolanus (1608); in several Heywood plays, ca. 1607-12; and in Valiant Welshman (1612). The great majority of such scenes appear in plays that either belonged to the Strange's-Derby's Admiral's-Prince Henry's dynasty, or that were written by Heywood (who started his career as an actor and playwright with the same group). The exceptions are in plays whose ownership is unknown (Locrine and David and Bethsabe), the three King's men's plays (and the possibility of a similar scene in their I Henry IV), and in the Queen Elizabeth's men's Selimus and (again a possibility only) Troublesome Reign. The Strange's companies may have had a predilection for this type of beginning, for in over half of their extant plays which include battles, there is at least one that begins on-stage; and there are such scenes in well over three-fourths of their plays that include any on-stage fighting at all during battles.

Coriolanus is unique with a sequence in which two battles begin at the same time. One of them, the assault on the city of Corioles, begins on the stage just a few seconds after the sounds of the distant off-stage clash of

the Roman and Volscian field forces are heard. [I.iv]<sup>8</sup>

### Beginnings--Location: A Few Problem Texts

In about a dozen cases, ambiguous or incomplete stage directions leave varying degrees of doubt as to how battles begin. Of particular interest among these are a few which involve a recurring phrase and some plays by Shakespeare.

In I Henry IV a sequence begins with a group of Rebel leaders on the stage--no soldiers are specifically called

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<sup>8</sup>An ambiguous sequence in Antony and Cleopatra might appear, at first glance, to represent two battles at once, but probably does not. Caesar has instructed his lieutenant to refrain from land battle until the sea battle is finished. Antony's army marches across the stage, and Caesar's army does the same. A stage direction reads "After their going in, is heard the noise of a Sea fight." The next line of the text calls for an alarum, followed by the entrance of one of Antony's men (and an incorrect entrance cue for another). The man has entered from a vantage point overlooking the sea battle: he has left, unable to watch any longer as the tide of battle began to turn against Antony's force. Then the second man makes his entrance with word of defeat. A few lines later the commander of Antony's land army enters, with word that his army fled when they heard of the loss at sea [III.x]. An alarum usually appears at the beginning of a battle sequence, not at the end, and the appearance of one here after the noise of the sea fight, might suggest the beginning of the land army battle. If we assume that Caesar's instructions were followed out, however, and if we accept literally the commander's words, we must assume that Antony's army fled without fighting a stroke. The alarum is then out of place and/or a product of the same confusion that calls for the entrance of two characters when only one should enter.

for in entrances, nor implied by the dialogue. Word is brought that the king approaches, and the Rebel leader draws his sword and makes a speech. Then a stage direction reads:

They embrace, the Trumpets sound, the King entereth with his power, alarum vnto the battell. Then enter Dowglas, and Sir Walter Blunt. [V.ii]

The battle continues off-stage.

In II Henry VI, in the Folio version of IV.ii-iii, Cade and his army are on the stage and one man says of the Stafford group (part of which has just left the stage) "They . . . march toward vs." The text reads:

Cade. But then are we in order, when we are most out of order. Come, march forward.  
Alarums to the fight, wherein both the Staffords are slaine.  
Enter Cade and the rest.

The battle is over at the latter entrance. The Quarto version (Contention) gives almost the same circumstances and stage directions except that an Exeunt occurs before the stage direction which, in this case, begins "Alarums to battaile, and sir Humphrey Stafford and his brother is slaine." [F<sub>4</sub><sup>V</sup>]

In II Tamburlaine, the army of Orcanes is on the stage and word is brought of the approach of Sigismond and his army. Orcanes says a few words and then, with no exit called for, a stage direction reads:

Sound to the battell, and Sigismond comes out wounded.  
[91]

The battle then appears to be in its final moments.

If we accept the stage directions in each of these battles--I Henry IV, the Folio version of II Henry VI, and II Tamburlaine--as they stand, the staging is identical. One army is on the stage, the other enters, they fight and exit fighting. And yet few editors have accepted these scenes as they are written. Sisson and Harrison, for instance, added an exeunt for the rebels in I Henry IV, and called for the King's army to march across the stage and exit; after which the sounds of battle are heard. In II Henry VI, Sisson thought that both armies entered fighting, and J. D. Wilson accepted the stage direction up to the end of the fray but called for Cade to stay on the stage and merely step forward at the end of the battle. Almost all editors since Robinson in 1826 have added an Exeunt for Orcanes and his army before the battle in II Tamburlaine.

Soliman and Perseda has an assault scene with a similar phrase and that may begin with fighting in view of the audience.<sup>9</sup> The leader of an army at the foot of

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<sup>9</sup>See Assaults, below, p. 342.

the walls of Rhodes calls for an assault: The text reads:

. . . then Iannisaries,  
 Let me see Rhodes recouered ere I die,  
 Souldiers, assault the town on euery side,  
 Spoile all, kill all, let none escape your furie,  
Sound an alarum to the fight  
 Say captaine, is Rhodes recouered againe.  
Capt. It is my lord . . . [H<sub>4</sub>V]

It may be too much to base an argument on the appearance of very similar phrases in each of these sequences, but although "alarums" are ubiquitous, the phrases in question--"Alarums to the battaile," "alarum vnto the Battell," "Alarums to the fight," "giue signall to the fight," "Alarues to the Battaille," and "Sound an alarum to the fight"--occur in my notes in only these few sequences, and in each case there is either a battle that begins on-stage or a question about the beginning. They all occur in pre-1600 plays, the period in which on-stage beginnings were most common. The evidence suggests that this general phrasing was used when one army entered to fight, upon entrance, with an army already on the stage.

The one stumbling block to this conclusion in I Henry IV is that the Rebels appear in an unlocalized scene and there is no hint that they are on the battlefield. However, the words of the Rebel leader--

Arme, arme with speed. And Fellow's, Soldiers, Friends,  
 Better consider what you have to do. [V.ii.76]--

suggest an on-stage force even though one is not mentioned in stage directions; and there seems no strong reason to dismiss the staging as it stands in the text.

The different stage directions in II Henry VI and the Contention also raise a question.<sup>10</sup> Cairncross and Greg felt that the stage directions in the Folio derived from the Quarto, but if this were altogether true, it would seem that the stage directions would be identical rather than merely often close. And it is quite possible that the Folio's own prompt-copy origin influenced some of its stage directions, if not all. Although we cannot be sure of the state of either text, it may be possible to use evidence from a similar scene--one about which there is little doubt and which uses a phrase similar to those being discussed--in III Henry VI-True Tragedy. The armies of York and of the Queen are on-stage, confronting each other. The Queen speaks, and finishes with a phrase similar to the ones found in the above stage directions: "giue signall to the fight." Then, in the Folio, a stage direction reads:

Alarum, Retreat, Excursions.      Exeunt. [V.iv.82]

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<sup>10</sup>It is often difficult to choose between the two texts, because the relationship of the stage directions has never been fully established. There are similarities and differences. See Play List.



The comparable stage direction in True Tragedy begins

Alarmer to the Battaille, Yorke flies, then the  
Chambers be discharged. Then enter the King . . .

and the battle continues. Here, then, is a stage direction which includes the key phrase, "Alarmer to the Battaille" used to signify the beginning of undoubtedly on-stage activity.

Perhaps the issue is too muddled for any conclusions to be drawn, but it seems as though the Folio (II Henry VI) staging of IV.ii-iii has as much claim to correctness as has the Quarto (Contention). It at least stands a very good chance of reflecting the scene as the author envisioned it.

The only reason to reject the stage direction in Tamburlaine as calling for on-stage fighting is that most of the other battles in the plays take place entirely off-stage. Not all do, however. Moreover, the printer of the play informs us on the title page that he has omitted "some fond and frivolous gestures." Although most editors assume that he omitted an exeunt at the point in question (line 91), it is just as likely that he chose to conceive on-stage battles as un-classically frivolous and to omit them; but that he was less than efficient at this point.

In Stukely [K<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>] and in Troublesome Reign [C<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>] two armies confront each other on the stage and without an

intervening exeunt, the texts call for excursions. An excursion is usually an activity that begins off-stage, but in neither case is there any anticipation of an exit in the dialogue. In both plays all the other battles (and there are three others in Troublesome Reign, one of which is identical in most details to the above) begin off-stage. The doubtful background of the two texts makes speculation difficult.<sup>11</sup>

Peele called for several battles in Edward I, but his stage directions are so skimpy it is impossible to guess his envisioned activity--on or off-stage. In one sequence the King is on the stage. Word is brought that Rebels are in the distant field. He exits to seek and confront them. Then the Rebels, Balliol, and his train enter. There is no talk of an approaching battle; merely an expression of unfriendliness to the King. Then, with no exeunt, there is the stage direction:

After the fight of Iohn Balioll is done, enter  
Mortimor pursuing of the Rebels. [2299-2300]

Two other battles in this play appear, through the fog of sketchy stage directions, to begin on the stage, but in

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<sup>11</sup>In the "plot" to Seven Deadly Sins, in which no exits are given, two armies confront each other, a man steps between them, a chorus-like character speaks, and there is "A Larum w<sup>th</sup> Excursions" [26-40].

such a text not much weight can be given to the mere absence of an exeunt.

Although the stage directions in Battle of Alcasar are open to varied interpretations, one of them accepted literally presents a battle with preliminaries of which occur first off-stage, then on, but which actually begins off-stage. [1301-3]<sup>12</sup>

#### On Stage Beginnings--The Battle Continues

Almost without exception, full scale battles that begin on the stage move into the tiring house as they progress, and continue out of sight of the audience.<sup>13</sup> One exception is in the early Horestes. Horestes' army and Egistus' army confront each other and then a stage direction reads:

stryke vp your drū. & fyght a good whil & then  
let sum of Egistus mē flye & thē take hym  
& let Horestes drau him vyolentlye & let y  
drūs sease. [D<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]

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<sup>12</sup>This scene is more fully discussed below, p. 366.

<sup>13</sup>Even in dumb-shows, usually thought of as complete units performed on the stage, the pattern is the same. In only one of a half dozen or so dumb-show battles is the battle played out entirely before us: in Four Prentices, a Chorus brings on a long expository dumb-show to save time. In it we are shown a group of citizens subjected by the Spanish, and who, after one of the heroes stirs them to action, "set vpon the Spaniards, & beate them away" [176].

In non dumb-show sequences in later plays, the apparent exceptions--battles that begin and end on the stage--do not seem to be intended to represent full-scale battles, but are usually preliminary skirmishes or clashes between small bands of men.

In Orlando Furioso, for instance, a fight on the stage begins with the entrance of Orlando and soldiers (armed with spits and dripping pans--indicative of the hastily conscripted force we have seen the mad Orlando collecting in an earlier scene) who confront the waiting enemy. Orlando's force wins the fray, and the enemy flees [981-2]. The text is rather muddled in this scene--Greg felt that not only are things missing from the stage directions themselves, but that the stage directions were attempts to create in action replacements for missing scenes--<sup>14</sup> but the spits and dripping pans as well as a few vague hints in the dialogue give the impression that this clash is merely one between small contingents.

A similar conflict is found in Weakest Goeth to the Wall [519-601]. A group of Spanish soldiers enter before a town. Then "Enter Mercurie and his men." There is a fight, and Mercurie and his men flee, leaving the Spanish

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<sup>14</sup>Greg, Two Elizabethan Stage Abridgements, 226.

to gloat. The dialogue suggests that Mercurie's group is no more than a band of men, perhaps a town garrison. Both this and the Orlando Furioso groups seem, in fact, to be part of the tradition of the small brave band of men that dare to take on a much larger force.<sup>15</sup>

Only one other scene depicts what, at first glance, appears to be a field battle entirely within sight of the audience. In Four Prentices, two armies, after extensive establishment of a stand on the stage, meet with the stage direction: "Alarum. Ioyne Battle: The Christians are beaten off." The winning army then marches off the stage "victoriously" [244]. The latter exit (an apparently unique piece of staging) gives--on the printed page--the impression that the battle is finished. However, as soon as the victors are in, two men enter and we learn that the battle continues off-stage.

Three assault scenes include clashes that occur completely in view of the audience. In I Edward IV a contingent of a rebel force attacks the walls of London with the stage direction "a very fierie assault on all sides" [20]. The attack is unsuccessful, however; at the end of it another rebel contingent enters, and shortly afterward both contin-

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<sup>15</sup>Another such group is found in Larum For London.

gents exit to meet the enemy in full-scale battle--off-stage. In David and Bethsabe, Ioab and his force stand before the walls of a city and threaten soldiers on the walls. A stage direction reads "Assault, and they win the Tower, and Ioab speakes aboue" [222]. The ensuing dialogue establishes that this was no more than a preliminary skirmish, however; only the first tower has been won.

The somewhat suspect text of Devil's Charter includes the most complete battle of this type. Caesar and his army are at the walls of a town. They set up camp and then five enumerated people, and "soldiers," drums, and trumpets, enter "vpon the walles." The group above challenges Caesar's group to charge, and a stage direction reads:

A charge with a peale of Ordinance: Caesar after two retreates entreth by scalado, her Ensigne-bearer slaine: Katherin recouereth the Ensigne, & fighteth with it in her hand. Heere she sheweth excellent magnanimity. Caesar the third time repulsed, at length entreth by scalado, surpriseth her, bringeth her downe with some prisoners. Sound Drums and Trumpets. [2362-7]

It is difficult to know how much of this to accept. The title page tells us that the play was published "As it was plaide . . . But more exactly renewed, corrected and augmented since by the Author, for the more pleasure and profit of the Reader." The extraordinary number of people on the

upper stage, the involved business called for on the upper stage, and the repetition, give the impression that this stage direction is "augmented" to some degree. And yet the use of purely theatrical terms in all the stage directions in the text shows them to be closely related to performance, and almost leads us to speculate that they are something akin to reported versions of stage activity. It is not really necessary to conjecture excuses for this scene, however; the text does not permit much to be built upon it, and it appears to be the only real exception to the pattern that full-scale battles do not take place in their entirety on the stage.

#### Beginnings--Conclusion

As we have seen, most battles begin out of sight, and those that begin on-stage soon exit and continue out of sight. Once they are begun, then, Elizabethan stage battles take place out of the view of the audience, and the stage becomes not the field of battle but a place on the periphery of the fray. Sometimes it is the edge of the field, often it is just beyond the edge, and sometimes it is a vignetted spot somewhere on the battlefield. But as long as the sounds of battle continue in the tiring house, the audience (and the playwright) can imagine the clash of mighty and gigantic armies to be in progress in the near

distance, and any on-stage activity to be a mere fragment. We might imagine the tiring house wall to be a hill between us and the main battle (it appears that way in Julius Caesar [V.iii] and in Bonduca[1461]). Often, when the scene portrays an assault on a city, the tiring house wall becomes the city wall, and the audience remains outside the town while the battle rages within.

Alfred Harbage wrote of "that small sector of the battlefield symbolized by the stage."<sup>16</sup> This perspective is implicit in almost every battle scene in the period, but is perhaps best exemplified in Cymbeline. The audience sees two armies march across and off the stage, and then hears the sound of battle. There is a duel, an excursion culminating in a capture, an extended group fight, and a final exit to the still raging off-stage battle. After the battle, when someone asks where this (on-stage) sequence occurred, he is told "Close by the battel." [V.iii.15]

The apparent agreement among playwrights that it was necessary to keep full-scale battles out of sight, even in plays in which on-stage clashes of large groups of actors were presented, suggests a uniformity of viewpoint. The implications of this, and the possible reasons, will be

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<sup>16</sup>Theatre for Shakespeare, 52.



discussed after the ensuing phases of battles have been examined.

### The Battle Itself--Sustained Sounds

After the opening burst of sound has established that the battle has begun, most battles continue in one way or another for at least a short period of time. In a substantial number of cases the sounds of battle are specifically called for to continue throughout sequences.

In the dumb-show battle in the early Gorboduc, drums and flutes played throughout the entire scene [ $D_4^r$ ]. In the equally early Horestes are the two stage directions:

Go & make your liuely battel . . . and when you haue won it . . . let y<sup>e</sup> droum sease playing & the trumpet, also . . . [ $D_1^r$ ]

Stryke vp your drũ, & fight a good whil . . . & let y<sup>e</sup> drũs sease. [ $D_2^r$ ]

Similar development occurs in King Leir:

Sound alarum: excursions. Mumford must chase Cambria away: then cease. [2615-16]

In some sequences the word still occurs. In the Contention is:

Alarmes againe, and then enter three or foure, bearing . . . Buckingham . . . to his Tent.  
Alarmes still . . . [ $H_3^v$ ]

and in Battle of Alcazar there is:

Alarums within, let the chambers be discharged, then enter to the battell, and the Moores flie.  
Skirmish still, then enter . . . [1300-02]

Whether we interpret still to mean stop or continue, the word suggests that, until it appears at least, the noise has been continuous.

In Guy, Earl of Warwick, a stage direction calls for "Alarum Excursions" and series of chases and fights, at the end of which the King enters and says "Command these brawling drums to cease their noise." [G<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>]

There are similar calls for sustained sound even in scenes with dialogue. In If It Be Not Good, "Allarums afar of" signifies the approaching enemy. Several men enter and talk of the battle for a while, and then "Allarum still a farre off" [336-7]. Similarly, in II Robin Hood, a sequence begins with "Alarum within," followed by the entrance of two men who have left the battle-field and who talk of the battle. Then a stage direction: "Alarum still" [H<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]<sup>17</sup>. In II Iron Age, after a sequence of short vignettes showing the sack of Troy, is "The Alarum continued . . ." [394].

In Macbeth there is a clear call for the sounds of

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<sup>17</sup>In two other plays from about the same period there may be similar development. In both cases the sound is referred to in the dialogue, but not called for in a stage direction. In II Tamburlaine, one man says "our enemies drums / And rattling cannons thunder in our eares . . ." [112]; and in II Henry VI, Warwick enters and says:

Now when the angrie Trumpet sounds alarum,  
And dead mens cries do fill the emptie ayre . . .  
[V.ii.3-4]

battle to be sustained through several sequences. At the inception of the battle, Macduff calls for trumpets to be blown, and he and his army exeunt. The next line in the text is a stage direction that reads "Alarums continued," and then, obviously as reminders from the author or prompter, the word "Alarum" appears in the margin or in entrance cues five more times during the battle [V.vi-viii]. The same mind may have been at work in a stage direction in Cymbeline which (in the midst of a battle) reads: "The Battaille continues . . ." [V.ii]<sup>18</sup>

The method used in Macbeth was common. In Rape of Lucrece a "soft alarum" begins the fray. Then, after "Alarum, battell within," each of the eight stage directions from this point to the end of the battle begins with an Alarum [247-252]. The same approach occurs in Battle of Alcazar [366, 1384, 1410, 1428], Trial of Chivalry [I<sub>1</sub><sup>R</sup>-I<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup>], and I Iron Age. [310-12]

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<sup>18</sup>Several decades later the King's men were using the same general phrasing. In Caesar and Pompey, the stage directions of which are thought to be for a post-1631 production, a battle begins with a chase and exit, after which a group comes on stage, and a stage direction reads, "The battle continued within" [377]. Lovesick King, which may be related to the London theatre only through its possible connection with a professional actor (see Play List), begins with a battle in progress. The first lines in the text are a stage direction dealing with the entrance of a group from the field: it ends with "Alarms continuing afar off" [3].

It is fairly apparent that, in plays early and late, it was general practice for the sounds of battle to continue unbroken from beginning to end.<sup>19</sup> As we have seen earlier, it was general practice to precede entrances with the sound of marches, and to blend pre-battle marches into battle alarums. Here we see that the alarum and sounds of battle continued on to the end of the fray.

### The Sound Effects of Battle

War is a noisy business. In the first chapter of Shakespeare's Military World, Paul Jorgensen gave a thorough presentation of contemporary military and theatrical expressions of the clamor of battle.<sup>20</sup> The noisiness

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<sup>19</sup>An exception is in I Tamburlaine. Four women are on stage awaiting the outcome of a battle. As they wait, they talk. A stage direction reads "They sound the battell within, and stay." The women say a few lines, and there is "To the battell againe." The women react to this as a sign that the battle is over [43]. Perhaps Marlowe felt that the voices of four boys would not be strong enough to carry over the sounds from the tiring house.

<sup>20</sup>Pages 1-34. Professor Jorgensen, who has written the only extended treatment of the sound-effects of battle that we have, has arranged his first chapter so that it appears to substantiate his theory of Elizabethan battle scenes, a theory based on the well developed Elizabethan analogy between Music and the noise of War. He states that when playwrights came to present battle scenes, they translated this "Noise-Music" into "Poetic Music." He attempts to strengthen this claim with the statement that Shakespeare did not like the "real" sounds that were used in the theatre--a statement for which he gives no substantiation--and preferred to "connotatively render" the noise of battle in dialogue [pp. 3-4]. He

of real war was often commented upon by military men and civilians, and he cited innumerable comments in plays to show that Shakespeare and his playwright contemporaries were quite conscious of the clamor.<sup>21</sup>

There is little doubt that the clamor of real war was reflected on the stage. Ben Jonson had one character cite as the superlative of noisiness--noisier than belfries, cock-pits, Paris Gardens, and Billingsgate at their loudest--plays "that were nothing but fights at sea, drum, trumpet, and target."<sup>22</sup> The Prologue to Henry VIII, illustrating the seriousness of the play, tells the audience that they will not hear "A noise of Targets" [Prol. 22]. The Prologue to Two Merry Milkmaids told the Red Bull audience that the play would not be a noisy one,

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does not, for he cannot, completely dismiss sound effects in the theatre, but by ignoring the distinctions between differing effects (for example the varied meanings of "Alarum") and, primarily by merely assuming without evidence that his own sophisticated taste for poetry rather than for noise was felt by Shakespeare and his audience, he develops a picture of an Elizabethan stage of comparative quiet--a kind of stage for interpretative reading rather than plays.

<sup>21</sup>At least one reference he left out is in the academic play Claudius Tiberius Nero, in which one character, speaking of her birth in the camp, says "my paines / Were eased by the ayer-renting sounds, / Of warlike Sackbuts, Clarions, and Drums" [1426-8].

<sup>22</sup>Epicoene, 230.

So that the Stage being reform'd, and free  
 From the loud Clamors it was wont to bee  
 Turmoyl'd with Battailes; [A<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>]

and Nabbes, in Hannibal and Scipio

prayer

You will conceive his battailes done . . .  
 Nor need you Ladies feare the horrid sight:  
 And the more horrid noise of target fight. [A<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>]

When Davenant ridiculed the taste for "Target fight, a furious tale of Troy,"<sup>23</sup> he spoke of "twenty years ago"--but things do not seem to have changed appreciably over the years: when St. Amant visited London in 1640 he noted that in stage battles "Tôt après le tambour sonne; / Tout retentit de clameurs."<sup>24</sup>

One sequence which reflects both the noisiness of theatre battles and the relationship drawn between these sounds and music is in Travels of Three English Brothers. A group of English soldiers and the Sophy's army are on-stage. Each group decides to demonstrate its manner of war-making. The Sophy is first:

Weele show the manner of our Persian warres,  
 Our musique and our conquests . . .

The Sophy's men divide and perform a battle. Then the English group performs one, after which the Sophy comments:

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<sup>23</sup>Unfortunate Lovers, Q<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>24</sup>Jusserand, Shakespeare in France, 128.

. . . your warres are royall,  
 So ioyn'd with musicke that euen death it selfe  
 Would seem a dreame: your instruments dissolue  
 A body into spirit, but to heare  
 Their cheerefull Clamours: and those your Engines,  
 (We cannot giue their proper Character)  
 Those lowd tongues that spit their spleene in fire,  
 Drowning the groanes of your then dying friends.  
[A<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>-A<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>]

It should be apparent from previous chapters that theatrical companies were well equipped for clamor. Drums, which were used for the sound of marching soldiers before most battles and for a variety of effects during the battle; trumpets, which were used for various signals during battle; swords that could be struck against each other and against targets: all of these were in the store of every company in the period and appear in the earliest plays.

### Shouts

The actors themselves were capable of making a great deal of noise without artificial aids. Twelve to thirty trained male voices can make a great variety of loud noises, and can sustain them for a considerable length of time. One early play, King Johan, has a delightful one-man vocal uprising inserted into the margin for a performance in 1561:

Extra locu  
Sedicyon Alarū Alarū, tro ro ro ro ro, tro ro ro ro ro,  
 tro ro ro ro ro  
 Thomp, thomp, thomp, downe downe downe, to go  
 to go, to go

K. Iohan what a noyse is thys, that without the  
dore is made  
p'uat welth Suche enmyes are vp, as wyll your realme  
inuade. [1378]

Later plays produce nothing so simple and neat, but shouts  
and cries abound.

Shouting has always been a concomitant of hand to hand battle. The war-whoop of the American Indian was calculated to instill horror in the enemy, and even today British and American armed forces are trained to roar and shout when attacking, partly to frighten the enemy and as much to bolster their own spirits.

The tradition of shouting in the theatre battles probably goes back a long way. In Robin Hood and the Friar<sup>25</sup> there are a variety of sounds: Robin blows his horn to call his men, the Friar whistles loudly to call his, and the Friar says:

Now, Cut and Bause!  
 Breng forth the clubbes and staves,<sup>26</sup>  
 And downe with those ragged knaves!

The OED is not sure of the meaning of Bause, but suggests it is related to Bawse, which probably means to exclaim or shout.

25One of the Robin Hood plays which, although published in 1550, has its roots and probable origin in the previous century: see Chambers, Medieval Stage, I, 178.

<sup>26</sup>Manly, Specimens of the Pre-Shakespearean Drama, I, 284-5.



In many plays names are used as battle cries, especially at the beginning of a fray. In Famous Victories the battle begins with the stage direction "The Frenchmen crie within. S. Dannis. S. Dennis. Mount Ioy S. Dennis" [F<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]; the English assault against Orleans, in I Henry VI, begins with the stage direction "Cry, S. George, A Talbot" [II.i]; in Four Prentices, the four brothers attack their opponents with the cry "A Syon, a Ierusalem, a father" [246]; in Christian Turned Turk, Ward's men are instructed to "shoute," after he cries "A Ward, A Ward, A Ward" [198]; immediately before an assault in Edward IV one leader shouts "Assault, assault,! and cry, a Falconbridge!" [19]; and it seems most likely that in Henry V, the king's command "Cry, God for Harry, England, and S.George" was echoed by his soldiers as they went once more into the breach at Harfleur. [III.i]

Although only a few direct calls for such cries appear during battles, there is reason to assume that they were shouted at different times during the fray, particularly as part of the many Alarums which gave the effect of off-stage activity. In III Henry VI, a stage direction reads, "Alarum, Retreat, Excursions," but in the companion, "reported," stage direction in True Tragedy there is "Then enter the King . . . and the rest, and make a great shout, and crie; For Yorke, for Yorke . . ." [H<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]. In the midst

of the above-mentioned battle in Four Prentices, two men enter shouting "A syon" and "A Ierusalem" [245]. During a battle in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida there is a stage direction calling for a "Shout," and we are shortly told that it is the Greeks shouting "Achilles". [V.ix]

A variety of other shouts and cries are called for. The Wife, in Knight of the Burning Pestle, as part of her instructions for a stage battle tells Ralph to have his soldiers "skirmish . . . and cry kill, kill, kill" [I<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup>]. In the midst of a battle in Lovesick King, an army of Danes enters and a stage direction instructs them to shout "kill, kill" [4]. Part of the sounds of a battle in Double Marriage are a cry, "Within, kill, kill, kill." [2P<sub>2</sub><sup>V</sup>]

The Spanish shout "sa, sa, sa, sa" in Larum For London [1134].<sup>27</sup> "Within crie arme" is found in Wyatt [436], and ". . . a sort of fellows . . . cross the stage crying arme, arme, arme" is found in Histrion-Mastix [291]. "Within a cry, follow, follow" occurs during a battle in Shoemaker a Gentleman [B<sub>2</sub><sup>V</sup>], and "A great noise, follow" occurs

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<sup>27</sup>The OED identifies sasa as a cry of fencers when thrusting home (comparable to touché), but it was apparently also used less technically, for it was shouted during the Essex revolt. In Historical Manuscripts Commission, Marquis of Salisbury, XI, 46, we find "But Orrell . . . did run and leap in the forefront with Sir Christopher Blunt and Mr. Busshel, their weapons drawn, crying "Saw, saw, saw, saw, tray, tray."

during a chase at the end of a battle in Wyatt. [443]

Heywood's Trojan War includes examples of slightly more complicated shouts, which if not exactly standard battle cries, are at least closely related. In I Iron Age a group of soldiers enter in the midst of a battle, and we find:

Al the Troians. Strike, stab, wound, kill, tosse  
firebrands, and make way,  
Hector of Troy, and a victorious day. [314]

During the sack of Troy in II Iron Age, we find:

Enter all the Greekes.  
Omnes. Burne fire, and kill, as you wound cry thus,  
Vengeance for Greece and Neoptolemus. [383]

The sacking of cities may have inspired such extended battle cries. In Histrion-Mastix we find:

. . . the ruder sort drive in the  
rest and cry a sacke, a sacke, Havocke  
havocke, Burne the Lawiers bookes; teare  
the Silkes out of the shops. [291]

During the Guisian ravage of Paris, in Massacre at Paris, there is a similar sequence: the text reads:

The Guise enters againe, with all the rest, with their  
Swords drawne, chasing the Protestants.

Guise.  
Tue, tue, tue, let none escape, murder the Hugonets.  
Anioy, Kill them, kill them. Exeunt. [400-05]

It seems likely that "all the rest" echoed at least the  
"Tue, tue, tue."

Vocal noise of a more general kind is also called for.

In Shoemaker a Gentleman two stage directions include "A shout within" [G<sub>1</sub><sup>r&v</sup>]. In both cases the shout precedes the entrance of a group of soldiers, and it would seem that the function of the noise was to add anticipatory tension before the entrance. In II Iron Age, during the sack of Troy, are the stage directions, "A great cry within" [381] and ". . . shrieks and clamours are heard within . . ." [394]; and in Lovesick King "Alarmer and cryes within" is the only stage direction dealing with an off-stage battle [4]. In Four Prentices an on-stage rescue is effected "with a shout." [246]

Some off-stage shouts signify particular events in a battle, word of which is brought to the audience immediately afterward. In Bonduca, "Loud shouts" signify the actual clash of two opposing forces [1467]. In Sophonisba [28], Revenge of Bussy [118], Weakest Goeth [1853], and Bonduca [1638-9], 'shouts within' are explained as significant of victory, and in Larum, a stage direction actually reads, ". . . a triumphant shout within." [799]

Although there is no evidence to suggest it (except perhaps the "Thomp, thomp, thomp" in King Johan) it is likely that the actors added to the off-stage clamor by stamping on the floor. Such an effect is still standard procedure in many wooden-floored theatres.

Firearms: Chambers, Shot, Piece, Ordnance

Undoubtedly the most notorious of all theatrical noise-makers are the "certain chambers" that set fire to the Globe in 1613. Cannons were in common use on the stage as early as 1574, when a proclamation was published dealing with the injury of spectators by the "engynes, weapons and powders used in plaies."<sup>28</sup>

The military engine for which Cannon was the general term came in a variety of sizes: the "Cannon," which fired a sixty pound shot; the "Basilisk," with a forty pound shot; and the "Culverine," with a seventeen-and-a-half pound shot.<sup>29</sup> Even the smallest of these, however, would have been too unwieldy and too unsafe for practical use in the theatre.

Cannon is invariably the weapon mentioned in dialogue. During a battle in II Tamburlaine a character says:

our enemies drums  
And ratling cannons thunder in our eares; [112]

in King John, Philip threatens to bend his "cannon" against an offending town [II.ii.37]; in Larum for London, a gunner leaves the stage to fire a "cannon" [203]; and in Henry V, the Chorus says:

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<sup>28</sup>Quoted in Jorgensen, Shakespeare's Military World, 2.

<sup>29</sup>Shakespeare's England, 139.

the nimble Gunner  
 With Lynstock now the diuellish Cannon touches.  
[III. Prol.]

In fact, however, the word cannon does not appear in stage directions at all. The Henry V speech is immediately followed by "Alarum, and Chambers goe off," and in the great majority of other cases it is the word "chambers" that appears. In True Tragedy (a "reported" text), a stage direction in the midst of a battle reads "the Chambers be discharged" [ $H_1^F$ ]; in the Battle of Alcazar (of prompt copy origin), a battle begins with "Alarums within, let the chambers be discharged . . ." [1300-01]; in the "reported" text of the Contention a stage direction reads "the chambers be discharged, like as it were a fight at sea" [ $F_1^V$ ]; in the perhaps reported, somewhat "literary" 1606 ending to II If You Know Not Me, the entrance of the Queen is preceded by "A peale of Chambers" [344]; in Travels of the Three English Brothers, a military threat is given with the stage direction "Chambers go off" [ $A_4^V$ ]; and in the Revenge of Bussy, during a battle, there is the stage direction "Alarum still, and chambers shot off." [118]

Chambers was, according to OED, the term given in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to a small piece of ordnance without a carriage. It was fired standing on its breech, and was used for firing salutes. This mode of fir-

ing prevented the use of a charge large enough to cause a strong recoil, but in the comparative confines of a theatre, a full sized military blast would probably have been excessive. Chambers had the added theatrical virtue of easy portability. And, as we shall see, no more was necessary.

The term Ordnance appears in several stage directions. In II Henry VI, a sequence begins with "Alarum. Fight at Sea. Ordnance goes off" [IV.1];<sup>30</sup> and in Devil's Charter, during an assault scene, there is ". . . ordnance goeing of (after a little skirmish within)" [1002]. The OED defines Ordnance as "Engines for discharging missiles . . . a large gun," but there is no reason to believe that the term meant anything other than chambers as far as the theatre was concerned.

The term Shot is used several times in a way that suggests chambers. In II If You Know Not Me, the meeting of the Spanish and English navies is represented by the stage direction "A peale of shot within" [338]; in Edward III an off-stage sea battle is represented by the stage directions:

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<sup>30</sup>This is the (probably) prompt-book version of the stage direction cited above from the Contention, which used "chambers."

The Battell heard afar off.

Shot.

Retreate. [E<sub>3</sub><sup>r-v</sup>]<sup>31</sup>

and in Fortune By Land And Sea, a sequence begins with "A great Alarum and shot" [410], and the entering characters establish that there has been a fight at sea. The three latter instances are sea-battles, and several of the above-mentioned uses of chambers were in sea-battles.<sup>32</sup> It is likely that the stage direction "Shot" which follows the command "Gunners straight give fire" during a sea battle in I Fair Maid of the West [316] was also a call for chambers.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>This is spoken of in the text as "cannon" [E<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>].

<sup>32</sup>Cf. Hodges: "The acme of all cannonading on the Elizabethan stage is the sea battle," Globe Restored, 82.

<sup>33</sup>Shot could, of course, refer to any missile fired from any type of gun, but there is little evidence in any of the plays in this study that relates it to any weapon other than Chambers. A few ambiguous instances do exist. At the ending of a "Triumph" in I Antonio and Mellida, a stage direction reads "a peale of shot is giuen" [341]. Although such a direction would probably call for the use of chambers under the circumstances, Sir William Percy's stipulation in The Aphrodisiall that his call for chambers could be imagined if presented at Pauls [cf. Lawrence, Pre-Restoration Stage Studies, 212-13] leads us to suspect that there were none there. If not, Marston's stage direction (if carried out) may have been effected by muskets or pistols. In the problematical text of Devil's Charter, a military group enters, and a few carry "small shot" [D<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]. In the anonymous Dick of Devonshire, the manuscript of which dates from about 1626 but for which as yet no theatrical connections have been clarified, an authorial direction calls for "Three or 4 shott" to be fired off-stage by muskets [744]. Muskets, which appear in authorial stage directions throughout the play--12 at once are called for in one scene--are not used in the play's earlier unusual battle.



Piece occasionally appears in stage directions. The OED identifies it merely as a seapon for shooting, and it could have meant anything from pistol to cannon.<sup>34</sup> In Larum for London it is used to mean chambers: after the gunner exits to fire a "cannon," a stage direction reads "The peice discharges" [203]. In Fortune by Land and Sea it is used in the context of a sea battle: the enemy ship approaches and a character says "hark they shoot already," at which a stage direction reads "A peece goes off" [416]. If we can accept Hodges' feeling about cannonading and sea battles, there is a good chance that piece, in this instance too, meant chambers.

Every one of the above-mentioned examples occurs off-stage. There is, in fact, no evidence that a cannon or cannon-like device was ever used in sight of the audience. E. K. Chambers implied that a cannon was fired on the stage in Larum for London,<sup>35</sup> but an examination of the text shows that the firing occurred off-stage. The sequence begins with a conversation between the Governor--who is identified as "walking heere without the Castle" [217]--and the Gunner.

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<sup>34</sup>In a dumb-show in Gorboduc it is used to mean musket or arquebus [D<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>].

<sup>35</sup>E. S., III, 54.

The Gunner exits to fire a cannon from the castle to the town. The stage direction at this point reads "The peice discharges" [203] and the sound is heard by the Governor. G. H. Cowling assumed that the Chorus' speech in the Prologue to Henry V., act III, was narration to some sort of on-stage dumb-show,<sup>36</sup> which included a "small battery of cannon, which had already been in action," but there is no evidence of any kind to support his claim.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Stage, 12.

<sup>37</sup>The muddled text of Whore of Babylon leaves some confusion as to where and how the chambers were fired in one scene. At the beginning of the sequence the text reads:

The Sea fight.

3.K1. The sulphurous AEtna belcheth on our ships,  
Cut Cables, or the whole fleete drownes in fire . . .

1.K1. What Hulkes ar these, that are on fire?

3.King. . . . Pedro de Valdes

Hauing about him 50. Canons throates,

. . . is boarded, taken . . .

The best . . .

Is to hoise sayles vp, and away.

Omn. Away, away, hoise sailes vp and away . . .

Exeunt.

Florimel followed by Captaines, Marriners and  
Gunners with Linstockes.

Flor. Shoot, shoot, they answer; braue: more

Linstocks: shoot: . . .

Om. Board, board, hoyse more sailes vp, they flie,  
shoot, Shoot. Exeunt

Titania in the Camp.

[K<sub>2</sub><sup>V</sup>-K<sub>3</sub><sup>R</sup>]

and then follows a scene full of allegorical figures and significance. In the midst of the latter scene, however, apropos of nothing said or done in the scene, and unnoticed

In fact, in spite of the many references to guns of all kinds and the frequent appearance of hand guns on the stage, firearms are fired in view of the audience only in II Tamburlaine (a musket), in the post-battle scene involving the execution of the Governor of Babylon [128], and in Larum for London (a pistol), in the post-battle murder of a captive. [1078]

### The Uses of Sound Effects

With the battle begun in a burst of sound, and a large variety of noisemaking equipment at hand, we would, of course, like to know what was done and how much it was done. As far as sound-effects are concerned, we know how most battles began, and, as we shall see, we have a fairly good idea how they ended, but we can be less than certain about the "in-betweens."

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by anyone in the scene, is the stage direction "They shoote. A peale goes off" [K<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>]. It seems obvious that this direction belongs somewhere in the midst of the battle, probably after Florimel's command to shoot. Even with a re-arranged text, it is difficult to know for sure exactly what was done on the stage. It seems likely, however, that the stage direction notation "Linstockes" gives us a clue: the gunners with linstocks entered at one side and hurried off the stage at the other, from which side came the peale of the chambers. Here too in spite of the apparent demand for a great deal of off-stage cannonading, there is no call for a weapon to be fired on the stage.

One group of stage directions is frustratingly vague. In Edward III we find "The Battell hard afarre off" [E<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>]; in I Tamburlaine we find "They sound the battell within" [43]; in Bonduca we find "A Battel struck within" [3H<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>, 2nd Ser.]; in Caesar and Pompey, in a stage direction perhaps dating from a 1631 revival,<sup>38</sup> we find "The battle continued within" [377]; in Knight of Malta we find "A sea-fight within . . ." [2T<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]; in Rape of Lucrece we find "Alarum, battell within" [247]; and in Antony and Cleopatra we find "After their going in, is heard the noise of a Sea fight" [III.x]. If we couple these stage directions with the many instances of Alarum in which it is apparently being used to designate the general sound effect of a battle, we are confronted with a large body of evidence which shows that battles were created, at least in part, through sound. But we are no nearer to identifying the sound itself than we were.

One piece of external evidence suggests that it was not too different in some details from the real thing. In An Apology for Actors Heywood wrote of an incident that occurred in "Perin," in Cornwall, just before the turn of the century:

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<sup>38</sup>See Play List.

certaine Spaniards were landed the same night  
 vnsuspected, and vndiscovered, with intent to  
 take in the towne . . . when suddenly . . . the  
 players . . . presenting a battle on the stage  
 with their drum and trumpets strooke vp a lowd  
 alarme: which the enemy hearing, and fearing  
 they were discovered, amazedly retired [G<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]"

There is some question of the event,<sup>39</sup> but Heywood in  
 his role as apologist would have had to present a story  
 that was at least plausible.

Only one stage direction specifically associates  
 certain sounds with a "battle." In Two Noble Kinsmen a  
 sign from Heaven (via Mars) is described in the stage direc-  
 tion:

there is heard clanging of Armor, with a short  
 Thunder, as the burst of a battell [3K<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>, 2nd Ser.]

There is so much critical speculation about the play and the  
 text<sup>40</sup> that it is not safe to base any but the most general  
 conclusions on this. The last phrase may be related to the  
 first part of the direction and imply an ethereal battle of  
 some kind, or it may be either a prompter's or author's  
 afterthought of amplification. If the latter, we cannot be  
 sure if he had in mind a Public theatre in 1613 or a Private

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<sup>39</sup>Chambers, E.S., IV, 250.

<sup>40</sup>See Play List.

theatre in 1625. At any rate, although it is quite likely that such sounds were incorporated into the sound effects of battle scenes, we have already seen that many other sounds were used as well.

Certain sound effects appear to have been almost standard procedure. The invariable association of the sound of a "march" with groups of soldiers was used to good effect in several ways. Quite often--so often in fact as to suggest general practice--the first notice of an approaching army comes from the sound of a "march" or drum "within."<sup>41</sup> This serves two purposes: it motivates the activity of characters on the stage who hear it, and it creates suspense. In at least a few cases the off-stage march is first heard "afar off"<sup>42</sup> or "Softly"<sup>43</sup>--such an effect would heighten suspense as the sound of the marching soldiers got louder and louder until they finally appeared on the stage.

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<sup>41</sup>III Henry VI, V.i.; Edmond Ironside, 1560; Woodstock, 2771; Locrine, 2116-17; Orlando Furioso, 949; Blind Beggar of Bednal Green, B<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>; Henry V, III.vi.; I Jeronimo, 325; Trial of Chivalry, H<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>; Alphonsus of Aragon, 1558; Julius Caesar, V.i.; Valiant Welshman, B<sub>2</sub><sup>r-v</sup>; III If You Know Not Me, 342; If It Be Not Good, 340-1; Lust's Dominion, E<sub>5</sub><sup>r</sup>; Bonduca, 644-5; etc.

<sup>42</sup>Ed. Ironside, Val. Welsh., Coriolanus, If It Be Not Good.

<sup>43</sup>Bonduca.

The sound effect was used even when armies did not actually come on to the stage. The noise of a drum or two and perhaps a trumpet or cornet, a reference to a "nearby army" by someone on stage, and the effect of a passing or approaching army was achieved without taking performers away from other more important activities.<sup>44</sup>

The sound of the 'march' not only accompanied soldiers on to the stage, it accompanied them off as they marched forth to battle. The steady rhythmic sound of the march would suddenly burst into the beating of an alarum and the explosion of other sounds of battle. Jorgensen noted the strong dramatic effect of such cumulative drumming in the battle scenes in Macbeth [V.vi-vii],<sup>45</sup> and there is every reason to believe that it was a fairly standard effect.

The use of sound to create the illusion of movement

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<sup>44</sup>I Henry VI, IV.ii; III Henry VI, I.ii; Richard III, V.iv; Sophonisba, 28; Valiant Welshman, D<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>. There is considerable critical and editorial difference about I Henry VI, III.iii. Drums are heard 'afar off' and a stage direction calls for an English March. No entrance is given, but one character on the stage says, "There goes Talbot." Then there is a French March, followed by the line "Now in the Rereward comes the Duke . . ." and shortly afterward the French Duke has lines to speak. Most modern editors conjecture a "cross-over" for both armies, but there is no real evidence for this, and if it was staged in this way it was a unique piece of business in extant texts.

<sup>45</sup>Shakespeare's Military World, 33.

was not limited to marching troops. The off-stage battle itself could move from one place to another. An example is in Julius Caesar, in the sequence that deals with the retreat of Brutus' forces, and the approach of Antony's army. The retreating Brutus and others come on to the stage, and while Brutus plays out his final scene, the stage directions portray the advance of Antony's army: "Low Alarums," "Alarum still," "Alarum Cry within, flye, flye, flye," and finally "Alarum. Retreat. Enter Antony . . . and the Army" [V.v]. The dialogue leaves little doubt that the intended effect was of an approaching (albeit one-sided) battle, managed by a gradual increase in the loudness of the sound.

Although the Julius Caesar sequence shows the effect at its clearest, it had been used for some time. In III Henry VI word is brought to the on-stage York that the enemy is approaching. There is "A March afarre off," and York and his forces decide to intercept the opponents. There is an "Alarum," and they exit. One of York's sons enters and says "Ah, whither shall I flye, to scape their hands," and the enemy lieutenant, Clifford, enters with soldiers, and kills him. Clifford and his men exit to return to the fray. There is an "Alarum," and York re-enters with word that the enemy has gotten the field. There



is "A short Alarum within" at which York says "Ah hearke, the fatall followers doe pursue," and a few lines later the enemy army enters [I.ii-iv]. The imagined locale of the stage does not change at any time during the scene: we hear the enemy approaching in the distance, we see York go forth to meet it, we see one straggler caught, we then see York fleeing from the army he has shortly before gone to meet, we hear it come closer, and finally it arrives. Of necessity, the sound of the approaching forces, and the battle itself, would have to increase in intensity for the effect to work.

In the next act of the same play, there is similar development. King Henry has been sent away from the battle, and as he stands soliloquising, two stage directions call for alarums. Then there are "Alarums. Excursions," followed by the entrance of the Queen and two others. They tell the King to flee with them, because the enemy is in pursuit. All exit, there is "A lowd alarum," and one of the Queen's lieutenants enters, wounded. He stays on the stage, unable to flee further, and awaits the victorious forces. Then there is an "Alarum & Retreat," and the enemy army enters. [II.v-vi]<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>The effect was still in use with the King's men in 1631, in Caesar and Pompey. A sequence begins with the pursuit of five kings over the stage. They re-enter, and

The early anonymous Edmond Ironside, for all of the Senecan awkwardnesses noted by the Malone Society editor, includes a combination of sounds and dialogue which gives a sophisticated effect of movement toward and away from the stage. Word is brought to Canutus and his army of the approach of Edmond and his army. Canutus and his men ready themselves, and there is the stage direction "Sound Drum w<sup>th</sup>in." Canutus realizes from this that Edmond is close at hand and says "stricke vppe drumes / and trumpittes sound" (this speech is anticipated by a marginal notation, in the prompter's hand, for an "Alarum"). Then

Alarum they fight Edmond drives Canutus offe the stage The drume soundes a farr offe.

The Chorus enters, says "The fight is hott . . .," and then continues to describe the off-stage action [955-66]. This is the only play in which an on-stage drum is specifically instructed to continue off-stage, but we can assume that in the case of battles which moved off and continued, the effect was a fairly common one.

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"The battle continued within." After consultation the kings decide to flee, and exeunt. There is "The fight nearer . . ." and some on-stage scenes of fighting. Then the victorious general enters shouting "Pursue, pursue . . . the day is ours" [377-8]. (Although the stage directions are thought to reflect a performance many years after the play was written, it is difficult to envision Chapman's dialogue used with any other stage directions.) A similar effect is found in If It Be Not Good [336-7].

## Signals

In spite of the fact that real-life military signals are often called for in many plays, the actors could not have always depended upon audiences to recognize them. Women would have been unlikely to know them, and not every man would have had military experience. They could not even have been sure of ex-soldiers. As early as the beginning of the century, Machiavelli had complained that whereas in earlier times drums had been understood and obeyed, they had become mere "rumour" and could be depended upon only to direct the mood of a battle.<sup>47</sup> Things were no better in the England of 1600. At the beginning of his Art of Gunnery, Thomas Smith complained that there were far too few even professional soldiers "that knoweth by the sound of Drum, and Trumpet, without any voice, when to march, retire, &c." [A<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]

An examination of the battle scenes in this study shows that none depend for their effect or understanding on audience recognition of a particular military signal.<sup>48</sup> Whenever an off-stage army is heard marching, someone on the stage

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<sup>47</sup>Art of War, 93.

<sup>48</sup>The one possible exception, a retreat in Coriolanus, is discussed below, p. 444.

tells the audience who they are. Whenever the context of the moment does not make it blatantly obvious that an Alarum is being played as a signal to battle, someone on the stage identifies it. Whenever a Charge is found in the script the audience is told that a charge is either in progress or has just finished. A Retreat is invariably followed either by word of victory, a victorious entrance, or the entrance of retreating soldiers.<sup>49</sup> There seems to have been, in fact, no necessity for any "real" military signals in the theatre at all. This does not mean, of course, that they may not have been used in some instances.

In two plays there is what may be an attempt to simplify the problem of identification. In Trial of Chivalry one side signals retreat with a trumpet, the other side with a drum [I<sub>3</sub><sup>V</sup>]; and in Coriolanus, during the battle of Corioli, the Romans signal with trumpets and the one Volsce signal is played on the cornet [I.v,vii,ix,x]. Not much can

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<sup>49</sup>This is not only true of battle scenes, of course. For example, Iago identifies the Moor's trumpet for us in Othello [II,i.179]; off-stage trumpets which signify the change of direction of an army are explained to us by a Widow in All's Well [III.v.8]; etc. In Sophonisba one military leader misinterprets a cornet signal as victory for his side, when it is actually victory for the foe [28]. Unless Marston wished the soldier to seem stupid, which is unlikely, the actors would have had to play a particularly indistinguishable signal at this point.

be made of these cases, however. In the former play the sounds are, as usual, immediately identified for the audience. Later in the latter play the Romans use cornets [II.ii; III.i] and the Volsces use trumpets. [V.vi]<sup>50</sup>

### Sound Effects--Illusional

In addition to the effects of varying distances that were managed by loud and soft sounds and the effects of off-stage group movement that were managed through variations in sound intensities, there are other stage directions for sounds which seem calculated to be illusional.

Calls for "A Great Alarum" occur in Lodge's early Wounds of Civil War [333], and in the later Queen Anne's company plays Fortune by Land and Sea [410 & 418], and I Iron Age [295 & 311]. A group in Larum for London makes "A great noise as they are going" [1117]. There is "A great cry within" in II Iron Age [381], "A great noise, follow"

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<sup>50</sup>The text may merely be inconsistent: at one point a formal procession enters with trumpets, but when it exits 62 lines later cornets are called for [II.i]. The inconsistency may reflect a text that was used in both the Public Globe and the Private Blackfriars. Normally, trumpets were used in Public Theatres, and the very different sounding cornets were used in Private Theatres: see J. H. Long, Shakespeare's Use of Music, 23-5. Greg, in Shakespeare's First Folio, 405-6, wrote that the cornets at I.x.1 and II.i.201 were prompter's additions. This would not explain the inconsistency in II.i, but might suggest a Private theatre prompter and a Shakespeare not yet fully adjusted to new circumstances.

in the 1604 Wyatt [443], "A great screeke heard within" in Larum for London [207], and "a great shout and crie; For Yorke, for Yorke" on the stage in the "reported" True Tragedy [ $H_1^R$ ]. Shouts and cries would add particularly realistic color to the off-stage battles.<sup>51</sup> Especially representational sounds are called for in the directions for "Shreiks and clamours . . . heard within" in II Iron Age [394], and "Alarmes within, and the chambers be discharged, like as it were a fight at sea" in the Contention. [ $F_1^V$ ]

#### Sound Effects--Music

The mere existence of William Byrd's battle piece for happensichord, although a far cry from Beethoven's Battle of Wellington, makes us wonder if such music was ever performed in the theatre either in lieu of a stage battle or as accompaniment to one. Little evidence exists either in theatrical studies or in musicological ones, but a few stage directions are worth examining closely if only to satisfy a modern curiosity founded on motion picture background music and the Tschaikovskian-like bursts of musical

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<sup>51</sup>Examples, some already commented upon in the section on Shouts, p. 233, are in Famous Victories,  $F_1^R$ ; Shoemaker a Gentleman,  $B_2^V$ ; Sophonisba, 28; Julius Caesar,  $V.v$ ; Wyatt, 436; Troilus and Cressida,  $V.vii$ ; Thracian Wonder,  $G_4^R$ ; Christian Turned Turk, 198; Bonduca, 1638.

melee which occur in many modern dramatic media.

After the Induction and Prologue to Antonio and Mellida, the play proper begins with the stage direction "The Cornets sound a battle within" [182]. The sixteenth century cornet was quite unlike the modern instrument; it was long and straight--somewhat like a clarinet--and produced a thin, reedy sound as the performer fingered the many holes. It was quite versatile, and unlike the trumpet which was used in England only for signals, flourishes, and fanfares, it was a melodic instrument widely used in ensembles. It was particularly popular in Private theatres.<sup>52</sup> The appearance of cornets here suggests the possibility that some sort of melodic battle was expected by Marston. However, Marston calls for cornets in almost all of the play's sound effects, including several charges and retreats that we would normally expect on the trumpet.

In Jonson's masque Hymenaei, presented at court in 1607, one of the seemingly after-the-fact stage directions reads, ". . . a battaile being sounded vnder the stage" [233]. This is just vague enough to make us wonder, aware as we are of the great musical content of court masques, if the battle may have been a musical one. A character

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<sup>52</sup>Long, Shakespeare's Use of Music, 23-25.

that enters immediately afterward speaks of "these sounds of warre," which would be unlikely for a description of music, but not impossible.

In Dick of Devonshire, a play which exists in manuscript in the British Museum, and for which a tentative date of ca. 1626 and the possible authorship of Robert Davenport (and, less likely but mentioned, Heywood or Shirley) have been suggested,<sup>53</sup> there is an off-stage preliminary skirmish described by an observer on the upper stage, followed by a full battle that occurs with the stage empty. The latter battle is presented in the stage direction:

Alarum. as y<sup>e</sup> soft musicke begins, a peale of ordnance goes off; then Cornetts sound a Battaile, w<sup>ch</sup> ended;  
Ent: Captaine, . . . [433-4]

Here the word music is actually used in conjunction with a battle effect, and such a stage direction would raise questions even if it could be shown that the play was not at all connected with the professional theatre.

With this in mind, two stage directions in Davenant's Siege of Rhodes become particularly curious. In one sequence a group of men exit to engage in a battle, and with the stage empty there is:

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<sup>53</sup>J. G. and Mary MacManaway, *Malone Society Reprints*, 1955, pp. ix-xii.



A Symphony expressing a Battel is play'd a while.

Several men enter briefly, calling for weapons and horse, exit, and then:

A Symphony sounds a Battel agen. [H<sub>4</sub><sup>r-v</sup>]<sup>54</sup>

Although this play dates from well after our period, Davenant had been writing before the close of the theatres, and in fact, wrote this work in 1656 before the theatres with their new conventions, reopened. There is a great deal of music in the play, for it was created as an Opera-Play, partly for its own sake and partly to evade the ban on ordinary plays.<sup>55</sup>

These four instances are the only basis for a suspicion that any sort of programmatic 'evocation' of battle was played by theatre musicians. They are not, in spite of the apparent modernity of the stage directions in Siege of Rhodes, very solid or convincing. The OED (and almost any book on the history of Music) informs us that the word Symphony did not acquire its modern meaning of an orchestral composition until well into the next century, and that in the

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<sup>54</sup>It may have been these directions that inspired Spedding to suggest that the battle in King Lear--after it had been moved to the division between acts 4 and 5--be portrayed with a battle-piece by Handel: in On the Division of the Acts in Lear . . . , 19.

<sup>55</sup>Nettleton, English Drama of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century, 21-6.

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it meant merely a group of instruments played together.

The musicologist F. W. Sternfeld, in a letter dated February 3, 1963,<sup>56</sup> wrote that he did not think any of the above stage directions imply programmatic evocation of battle. He went on to say:

I take it that by 'evocation of war' you have in mind a 17th century equivalent of something like Tschaikovsky's 1812 Overture or Beethoven's Battle of Wellington. This, at my present state of knowledge, strikes me as quite unlikely. Even the scoring for wind band of a harpsichord piece such as the battle by William Byrd strikes me as quite unlikely.

I think Elizabethan stage music did not evoke, it 'was', if you see what I mean. I think phrases such as 'cornetts sound a battle within' in Marston or 'a battle being sounded under the stage' in Jonson simply mean that the traditional battle signals are performed from the inner stage or from under the stage. Even the stage direction from the anonymous Dick of Devonshire simply means, first a drum roll, then soft music, let us say recorders, then cannon shots, and, finally, a fanfare sounded by cornets--cornets frequently serving as substitutes for trumpets. I see no need for any evocative music here, in the way it is frequently employed in the modern theatre or cinema.

Discounting, then, the possibility of such evocation in Antonio and Mellida, Hymenaei, and Siege of Rhodes and accepting the likelihood that the stage directions call for more or less standard illusional effects of battle, we are still

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<sup>56</sup>Several months before the publication of his Music in Shakespearean Tragedy.

confronted by Dick of Devonshire which calls for, in Professor Sternfeld's description at least, a not very realistic portrayal. The recorders, especially, seem most out of place. Even if some other instruments were used, however, "y<sup>e</sup> soft musicke" in an anonymous play of uncertain theatrical association from a period considerably after the period of our study must at least cause us to wonder if occasional experiments were made in the use of musical interludes where battles were supposed to be treading.

In summary to the preceding sections on sound effects, we have seen that stage battles began with a burst of sound which continued throughout the scene or scenes that portrayed the battle. The sounds were as imitative of the sound of real battle as the actors could manage, and several spectacular and sophisticated effects, such as the firing of cannon and the movement of whole battles from one place to another out of sight of the audience, were fairly standard practice throughout the period.

W. J. Lawrence thought Fletcher the greatest user of illusion through sound<sup>57</sup> and his opinion is perhaps borne out by the battle in Bonduca, which will be examined in the section devoted to the convention of the on-stage watcher or viewer of battles, p. 422.

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<sup>57</sup>Pre-Restoration Stage Studies, 219.

Battles Entirely Off-Stage

A very few battles are presented entirely through sound effects, while the stage is empty. In the rather muddled text of George a Greene, written about 1590, a sequence begins with the King and his army as though before the walls of a city. An alarum sounds, and a messenger enters with word of the enemy's approach. The King and his group exit, and without any intervening stage direction, the King re-enters, captive to the enemy.<sup>58</sup>

The often awkward and ambiguous stage directions in Tamburlaine seem to call for two such scenes. In part I, Cosroe and his force are on the stage preparing for a battle. There is no exeunt, and a stage direction reads:

Enter to the Battell, & after the battell, enter  
Cosroe . . . [31]

In part II, Orcanes and his force are preparing for battle with Sigismond. There is again no exeunt, and a stage direction reads:

Sound to the battell, and  
Sigismond comes out wounded. [91]

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<sup>58</sup>The lack of even a simple off-stage alarum as sound effect makes this probably memorial text suspect: only one other off-stage battle is similarly silent, in Caesar's Revenge, a play presented by students at Oxford University in the 1590's.

Sigismond tells us that the battle is over.<sup>59</sup>

Sir John Oldcastle, a decade later, appears to include an empty-stage battle. The King and three friends discuss the probable whereabouts of an up-coming battle, and exit to investigate. Then "After an alarum enter . . ." the King and his friends, with prisoners [1640]. It is possible that alarum here signified, as we have seen it sometimes did, some sort of on-stage, battle-like activity--earlier in the play there is an extended on-stage brawl that involves at least sixteen people, and it therefore seems unusual to skip over a battle-scene entirely. The multiple authorship of the play makes different treatments likely, however, and there is no evidence that alarum was used in Admiral's company plays to mean anything except a sound effect.

In the same year, the private theatre play Antonio and Mellida begins with "The Cornets sound a battle within," after which the hero enters with word of a battle at sea which has just finished. [182-219]

In I Edward IV (written about 1600), Falconbridge and

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<sup>59</sup>It has already been suggested that these two stage directions signify an on-stage clash. Although there are no other on-stage clashes of armies in the two plays (there are a few small skirmishes), neither are there any other battle scenes in which Marlowe leaves the stage entirely empty.

the rebels decide to assault an (off-stage) gate. They Exeunt, and the text reads:

The Lord Maior and the Citizens hauing valiantly repulsed the Rebels from the city, enters Falconbridge and Spicing, and their train, wounded and dismayed. [21]

A sea battle, or the great part of one, in Antony and Cleopatra [III.x], is fought while the stage is empty. A stage direction calls for the "noise of a Sea fight" followed by the entrance of Enobarbus who has watched the battle until the tide began to turn against his side.

Only one other such scene exists in a sequence safely attributable to the period before 1616. In Fortune by Land and Sea, we get alternate glimpses of two ships as they get closer and closer to each other. One group exits to grapple with the enemy, there is an alarum and flourish, and they re-enter, victorious [418]. In light of the strong resemblance of the Elizabethan stage to the decks of a ship, it seems as though Heywood and Rowley used especially conservative staging here, particularly inasmuch as they were writing for the usually boisterous Queen Anne's company.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> The corrupt and muddled memorial text of Sir Thomas Wyatt (about 1607) has a sequence in which an army exits to meet the foe, followed by an alarum, and then the entrance of an apparently victorious army. There is a strong suggestion in the ensuing dialogue that there was no battle, however, and that the enemy fled upon confrontation. [439-40].

After 1618, several battle scenes occur entirely off-stage, especially in plays by Fletcher and/or Massinger. The second act of The Knight of Malta (1618), by Fletcher, Massinger, and Field, opens with an off-stage sea fight followed by the entrance of the victors. The Double Marriage (1620), by Fletcher and Massinger, has a land battle just before the end of the play: a group on the stage exit for battle, and the text reads:

Within. Kill, kill, kill. Alarum Flo. Trumpets.  
Retreat [5F<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>]

and then the victors enter. In Massinger's Maid of Honor (1621) a group of people hear of a distant battle and exit to view it from afar. Then there are stage directions for a long charge and a victory flourish, and the victorious army enters. In Two Noble Kinsmen, written in 1613 by Fletcher and Shakespeare, but the stage directions of which probably reflect a 1625 revival,<sup>61</sup> the fourth act begins with "A Battel struck within: then a Retreat: Florish. Then enter Theseus (victor) . . ." [3H<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>, 2nd Ser.]. Several other Caroline plays have such sequences (including the intriguing one in Dick of Devonshire), but although fashion seems to have increased the popularity of the entirely off-stage

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<sup>61</sup>See Play List.

battle, it did not, as we have seen from contemporary comment, entirely displace other types.

If the preceding pages have seemed excessively argumentative about texts, it is because such scenes are rare, and because they make problems for the producer. However, before we review the problems inherent here, it will be helpful to examine the few scenes in which, although there is some sort of on-stage activity, a good part of the battle takes place while the stage is empty. Four sequences, in particular, are of interest.

In the early (1587) David and Bethsabe, one army is before the walls of a town. The text reads "Alarum, excursions, assault, Exeunt omnes. Then the trumpets . . ." and the assaulting group enters, victorious [851-2]. The impression received is that of a battle that begins in sight of the audience, and then exits and continues out of sight while the stage is empty.

Five years later, in Selimus, two assault scenes begin with fighting at the walls, after which the armies exit fighting and the battles continue off-stage. In both cases the next stage direction calls for the entrance of the victorious army [1200 & 2391-2]. Much the same approach is found in the 1607 Travels of the Three English Brothers:



two armies are on-stage, there is an alarum, a retreat, and then the hero enters, victorious [ $B_2^V$ ]. The "Tradesmen's" play, Hector of Germany, in 1614, has an identical sequence. [ $A_4^V$ ]

When we realize the effect of an empty stage during a play, it becomes apparent that if these sequences were played in the ways they are written--and although most of them are in texts in which the stage directions are primarily general authorial instructions, many of the authors were experienced public theatre men who would have envisioned staging in a practical manner--one widely accepted Elizabethan theatre convention comes into question, and one widely accepted belief about Elizabethan audiences (and audiences in general) looms in the foreground.

Miss Bradbrook once wrote that when an important group of characters leaves the stage, a break occurs that makes a pause.<sup>62</sup> Similarly, Harbage suggested that there were pauses--on an average of sixteen to a play--in which the stage was completely cleared to indicate a shift in time and place.<sup>63</sup> Not all critics agree that there were pauses during

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<sup>62</sup>Elizabethan Stage Conditions, 33.

<sup>63</sup>Theatre for Shakespeare, 51.

performances,<sup>64</sup> but it is safe to assume that when the stage was emptied, if only for a very few seconds, there would have been a concomitant easing of tension in the audience. After a few seconds of empty stage even the most sophisticated modern audience becomes restless, and an even slightly unruly element in an audience makes itself felt and heard at such a time. It is difficult to imagine the notoriously noisy and fractious Elizabethans staying mute and patient while the actors busied themselves out of sight with noise-makers. And the sentiments of the fastidious may be reflected in the comments of an eighteenth century critic, Francis Gentleman, who wanted to eliminate all off-stage battles so that the audience's ears would not be "stunned . . . by much unnecessary drumming and trumpeting."<sup>65</sup>

To assume that the stage stayed empty for a brief period while the sounds of battle developed in the tiring house is to assume an apparently unique convention, for there are not, to my knowledge, any other instances in which plot develops through sounds alone while the stage is empty. These eighteen sequences--and some are only "probables"--spread over a forty year period are unlikely to have established a con-

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<sup>64</sup>See Reynolds, Red Bull, 190.

<sup>65</sup>King John, Variorum Edition, 117.

vention of their own. We can only assume that if they are not the products of textual errors, they are attempts--perhaps experimental, perhaps the products of carelessness--to fall back on the inherent pause caused by an empty stage, and to use it to avoid the depiction of a full-scale battle. In spite of the fact that in most cases the playwrights had devoted a great deal of time building up to the battles, and that experience at other theatres and with other plays would have led audiences to expect more, the authors emptied the stage momentarily and hoped that the audience would assume (apparently without hint) a passage of time, and that when the sounds of battle were heard the effect would be that of the ending of the fray. How successful this was is questionable, for as we shall see the usual pattern was for characters that entered immediately after the sounds of battle to be involved in the fray; and any change from this pattern would have caused at least momentary confusion for the audience.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup>The modern producer does not have an audience even partially prepared for such a sequence, and he often has trouble at such a point. Experience bears out that if an army marches off the stage to do battle, and then a few short battle-like bursts of sound are heard followed by the immediate entrance of a victorious army, the effect is often ludicrous. The modern theatre has the facilities to "fade in" a battle with lights and recorded sound, but even this does not completely eliminate mild laughter and seat-shifting

In the cases (Antonio and Mellida, Knight of Malta, and Two Noble Kinsmen) in which the sequence begins an act, the hoped-for effect would have been easier to attain, of course. And if there were musical battles in Antonio and Mellida and Dick of Devonshire, the audiences would have had their savage breasts somewhat soothed while their eyes were starved.

#### On-Stage Activity--The Stage

In the great majority of battle scenes some sort of action occurs on the stage. Before we examine the action, it will be useful to examine the stage and its equipment.

Reynolds wrote of the Red Bull stage that in spite of the use of spectacle in many of the plays performed on it, it could have been structurally identical to the stage in the Swan drawing, with the single important addition of a third stage door.<sup>67</sup> Wickham, in his recent Early English Stages, accepted the Swan drawing as it stands, and seemed to imply similar structure in other theatres.<sup>68</sup> In a recent

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during or after empty-stage battles. There is no reason to believe that Elizabethans lacked a comparable sense of the ludicrous, and without any discoverable convention to help them, they probably would have reacted in the same way.

<sup>67</sup>Reynolds, Red Bull, 188.

<sup>68</sup>E. E. S., II (Pt. I), 204.

survey of theories about stage structure, Southern also accepted the Swan drawing as basically correct, but implied a third door behind a "hanging" (a hanging not drawn by De Witt).<sup>69</sup> Almost all other modern staging studies assume a third door in the majority of Elizabethan theatres. Although most battle scenes require only two entrances, and all scenes could be managed in some way with two, certain sequences cry out for three doors (cf. Richard III, Bosworth Field sequence, below, p. 292). If a third door existed, it would have been a great convenience.

As to the position of these doors in the tiring house facade, there is no reason here to be too speculative. Bernard Beckerman, who assumed that the doors were flat with the rear wall, deduced from this that entrances were therefore necessarily formal, especially when groups entered at two doors and met.<sup>70</sup> The only basis for such an argument would be an assumption that actors were incapable of anything but right-angled turns. In fact, the position of the doors would have little effect on the manner of army entrances. Side doors at an oblique angle to the tiring-house facade would add clarity to several assault scenes but this merely

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<sup>69</sup>Southern, "Current Controversies About the Elizabethan Stage," 78-80.

<sup>70</sup>Shakespeare at the Globe, 71.

subjective speculation needs to be discussed in the context of such scenes (for which see below, p. 330).

### The Stage--Walls and Platforms

In many scenes an army enters and engages in parley with representatives of a besieged town. The latter are usually designated as being on the "walls."<sup>71</sup> A few texts use "above,"<sup>72</sup> one uses "aloft" in one case and "walls" in others,<sup>73</sup> and several use "walls" and "above" interchangeably.<sup>74</sup> Although "walls" is undoubtedly a literary designation, it would be one easily used in the theatre, and there seems to be no reason to assume that any of the terms had specific theatrical meaning.

Recent studies have raised questions about the construction and appearance of the "upper stage." Although the Swan drawing does not show any balcony-like platform on the second level, some critics have claimed that there was one at the

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<sup>71</sup>Selimus, 1165 & 2391; Soliman and Perseda, F<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup> & H<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup>; II Tamburlaine, 124; Four Prentices, 230; Coriolanus, I, 17; Brazen Age, 224, etc.

<sup>72</sup>Humour Out Of Breath, H<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup>; Lovesick King, 40--but "walls" in the dialogue.

<sup>73</sup>I Henry VI, IV.ii, and I.vi, II.i.

<sup>74</sup>David and Bethsabe, both in one sequence--190 & 223; Edmund Ironside, both in one stage direction--873-4.

Globe,<sup>75</sup> and Hodges felt that a porch-like balcony, probably with rails round it, was present in the Hope, the Fortune, and most other Elizabethan theatres. Other critics have questioned the existence of a balcony or terrace, and have preferred to envision a stage similar to the De Witt drawing, with a gallery above the stage very much like (if not identical to) the spectator galleries in the rest of the theatre.<sup>76</sup>

In scenes of parley, there is little to choose between the two theories. There would probably have been a clearer view for the audience if the scenes were played on a terrace-balcony, but few of the scenes include much more than brave words from the walls. When we examine the assault scenes themselves, further comment can be made, but it will suffice to say here that there is nothing in any of the scenes to substantially validate or invalidate either viewpoint.

One of the most picturesque and exotic theories about "walls" was recently made by Hotson. He developed the thesis

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<sup>75</sup>See esp. J. C. Adams, Globe Playhouse, passim; and Hodges, Globe Restored, 64, et passim.

<sup>76</sup>Reynolds, "Was There a 'Tarras' in Shakespeare's Globe?", Shakespeare Survey, IV, 97-100; Reynolds, Red Bull, 100; Hosley, "Shakespeare's Use of a Gallery Over the Stage," Shakespeare Quarterly, VIII (1957), 15-31; Saunders, "Vaulting the Rails," Shakespeare Survey, VII, 69-81.

that the tiring house was underneath the stage and that entrances and exits were made through trapdoors into curtained "rooms" that projected at right angles to the rear wall, and which came out almost all the way to the front of the stage. Across the top of these "rooms" he envisioned a platform that served as the walls to towns, as well as other raised places.<sup>77</sup>

There are many practical objections to this idea. Entrances and exits of large assaulting armies would have been awkward in the extreme: the actors would have had to clamber to the top of the "wall," and then file slowly down two sets of trapdoors in order to exit. In even the most conventionally stylized performances such activity would seem ludicrous to the most patient audiences.<sup>78</sup>

Chambers suggested that portable "walls" may have been

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<sup>77</sup>Shakespeare's Wooden O, 34, 96, 197-99, 214-15.

<sup>78</sup>The conjectured "rooms" are in all instances very clumsy. Hotson admitted that at certain times, when entrances were being prepared, the curtains would be drawn for a short period, thereby obstructing the view for a fairly large segment of the audience. He contended that the cheapness of these seats would require the audience to put up with this sort of thing. But, at one point in his conjectured reconstruction of Game of Chess [48] these drawn curtains cut the entire climax of the play from the view of a third of the audience. It is most unlikely that any audience would put up with this sort of thing--especially the rough and unruly types that he contended occupied the cheaper positions.



rolled out through the doors for assault scenes,<sup>79</sup> and thought that the "j whell and frame in the Sege of London" in a Henslowe "Inventory"<sup>80</sup> may have served to roll out such walls. His only reason seems to have been to explain a staging problem in the Orleans siege scenes in I Henry VI [II.i]--a problem with which I have already dealt and for which I have proffered a staging that requires no special equipment beyond that found in the De Witt drawing.

The portable structure conjectured by Hodges<sup>81</sup> could have served for "walls," and Warren Smith suggested that a platform was sometimes put on the stage to serve as "walls."<sup>82</sup> Such a structure would have had to be quite sturdy to withstand the weight of climbing actors in assault scenes.<sup>83</sup>

There is almost no basis in stage directions or in

<sup>79</sup>E. S., III, 97.

<sup>80</sup>Foakes and Rickert, 320.

<sup>81</sup>See the section on Tents, below, p. 293.

<sup>82</sup>"Evidence of Scaffolding on Shakespeare's Stage," 29.

<sup>83</sup>In Julius Caesar Pindarus ascends a hill in order to view a battle [V.iii]. Smith suggested that the base of the Chair of State was used for such raised places ["Evidence . . ." 29]. Much the same thing was suggested by Reynolds, who thought the base of the state probably had steps [Red Bull, 57], and by Saunders ["Vaulting the Rails," 80-1]. Even a slightly raised structure would have caused an obstruction of vision for the "groundlings" unless placed well back.

contemporary drawings or commentary for some sort of portable or semi-portable set piece for walls and platforms. All battle scenes in this study can be staged on a permanent "upper stage" of some kind.

### The Stage--Gates

Critical opinion is divided about the existence and use of property gates. Chambers thought that gates could be inserted in the tiring house wall, in the front of an "inner stage" enclave.<sup>84</sup> W. J. Lawrence also thought that gates were often erected on the stage,<sup>85</sup> and Irwin Smith has submitted detailed diagrams and drawings of gates that he thought were semi-permanent parts of the stage.<sup>86</sup> On the other hand, R. C. Rhodes<sup>87</sup> and M. C. Bradbrook<sup>88</sup> assumed that a central stage door served as "gates." Aside from a possibly desired symmetry, however, there is no necessity for the gates to have been in the center, and Reynolds<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>E. S., III, 83.

<sup>85</sup>Physical Conditions of the Elizabethan Playhouse, 65.

<sup>86</sup>"Gates on Shakespeare's Stage," 159-76; and in Shakespeare's Globe Playhouse, 86-8.

<sup>87</sup>First Folio and the Elizabethan Stage, 121.

<sup>88</sup>Themes and Conventions, 11.

<sup>89</sup>Red Bull, 117-18; 122-29.

and Foakes<sup>90</sup> have both suggested that any stage door could have served as a gate.

Although Miss Bradbrook found scenes at city gates to be one of the two most common locales in Elizabethan drama,<sup>91</sup> gates do not appear with great frequency in battle scenes.

In a few cases, "gate" appears in the dialogue, but is not required by the action. In Edmond Ironside, during a siege, one of the protectors of the city says "soldiers gard the gatte[s]" [902]. Immediately before the actual assault on the city, one of the attacking soldiers' says

assault, the Cytie batter downe the walls  
skale all the Turretes, rush the gattes assunder.  
[910-11]

The second line of this speech was marked for cutting by the prompter: whether this in any way reflects the structure of the theatre in which the play was performed we cannot tell, but if it does, the prompter was excessively fussy, for when the attack occurs, it is interrupted before any entrance to the city is effected. Gates or not, they do not appear to have been used in the play.

Other plays include scenes in which gates are mentioned in dialogue, but are not used. In Sir Thomas Wyatt we find:

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<sup>90</sup>Shakespeare Survey, XI, 146.

<sup>91</sup>Themes and Conventions, 11.

Wyatt . . . Soft, this is Ludgate . . . ile knock.  
He knockes.

Enter Pembroke vpon the Walles. [441]

but no more mention is made of the gate, and Wyatt and his men leave without gaining entrance into the city. In Love-sick King an army on the stage threatens the King who appears "above" and who replies with:

set ope the gates  
 And like a torrent on their heads wee'll fall.  
 [1516-17]

but then there is an Exeunt and the scene shifts to another locale. In Stukely a group enters "on the walles" and comments that the gates are shut and that the approaching Stukely will not be admitted at any gate to the city, whereupon Stukely enters and asks "Are the gates shut alreadie?" Upon being informed that he may not enter, he exits [ $E_2^V$ - $E_3^R$ ]. In I Henry VI one scene opens with the entrance of Talbot who says:

Go to the Gates of Burdeaux Trumpeter,  
 shortly after which he demands of the city fathers that they open the "gates;" but here too there is no entrance or exit from the town, and no further mention is made of the gates.  
 [IV.ii]<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup>The early play, Horestes, has a scene before the wall of a town in which the person who speaks from within the town is referred to in the dialogue as the keeper of the gate, but

In three instances, "gates" are mentioned in the dialogue, and stage entrances are used, but gate does not appear in stage directions. Early in I Henry VI, Pucelle and her soldiers enter, and her first speech begins "These are the Citie Gates." A stage direction calls for one of the soldiers to "knock," and shortly after this Pucelle and her men enter the town [III.ii]. Similar circumstances occur in III Henry VI: there is much talk of the city gates, culminating in the lines:

<u>Hast.</u>	[below]	. . .	Open the Gates . . .
<u>Maïor</u>	[above]	. . .	the Gates shall then be opened.
			<u>He descends</u> . . .
	<u>Enter the Maïor</u>		
<u>Edw.</u>	So, Master Maïor:	these Gates must not be shut.	[IV.vii]

Later in the play [V.i] there is a scene with Warwick "ypon the walls," and the forces of Edward below. Edward demands "ope the Citie Gates," and is refused. Shortly after this Oxford and a group arrive and apparently enter the city, at which one of Edward's group says "The Gates are open, let vs enter too."

In both I Henry VI instances the gates are identified in the first speech by an entering group--a circumstance which leads us to suspect that there were no gates and that

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this seems to be only a passing reference--the person "within" is instructed to "speake ouer y wal," and gates are not mentioned again [C<sub>4</sub>v].

the speech was used to clarify the situation for the audience.<sup>93</sup>

In one case, gates appears in a stage direction, and although their use seems to be carefully avoided at one point, a stage entrance is used later in the sequence. In I Edward IV, Spicing and a group of soldiers enter below, and the text reads:

Spi. Open your gates . . .  
Spicing beats on the gates . . . enters . . . Maior . . .  
Maior. What's he that beats thus at the City gates.  
[14]

After much discussion the Mayor says:

Maior. . . . we will pull vp our portcullises,  
 And let me see thee enter if thou dare.  
Falc. . . . we will enter, or strike by the way.  
[16-17]

But then there is an Exeunt and the fighting is delayed. A short while later, as the actual assault is about to begin, the contending forces talk of "gates" and when the assault begins they exit to what appears to be fighting in the doorway [20-21]. Such an exit would necessarily seem to an audience to be an entrance into the city,<sup>94</sup> but Heywood took so much care throughout this scene to establish that the gates were out of sight, beyond the tiring house wall, that

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<sup>93</sup>Cf. Reynolds, Red Bull, 42-48.

<sup>94</sup>See the section on Assaults, below, p. 362.

it seems as though he was trying to establish the stage door as an un-localized exit in order to avoid the necessity to depict it as a gate.

There remain three plays in which gates are mentioned in stage directions and in dialogue, and which are clearly used by the performers.

In King John [II.i] a sequence begins with:

Heere after excursions, Enter the Herald of France  
with Trumpets to the gates.

F. Her. You men of Angliers open wide your gates . . .

The same demand is then made by an English herald, but in both cases the townsmen refuse. After a long scene the French King tells the townsmen to "ope your gates." There is no reply, and there is no stage direction of any kind, but the Exeunt at the end of the scene is apparently made into the town.

In Henry V [III.iii] a scene before the town of Harfleur begins with the stage direction "Enter the King and all his Traine before the Gates." At the end of the scene the Governor says "Enter our Gates . . ." to which the King replies "Open your Gates," and the scene ends with "Flourish, and enter the Towne."

In this context the most important sequence in which gate appears in a stage direction and in the action is in Coriolanus [I.iv]. Martius and his army enter "as before

the City Corialus." One member of a group "on the Walles" says:

our Gates,

Which yet seeme shut, we haue but pin'd with Rushes,  
They'le open of themselues.

The pertinent lines of the text in the rest of the scene are as follows:

Enter the Army of the Volces.  
Mar. They feare vs not, but issue forth their Citie . . .  
Another Alarum, and Martius followes them to  
gates, and is shut in.  
 So, now the gates are ope: now proue good Seconds,  
 . . . Marke me, and do the like.  
Enter the Gati.  
i. Sol. See they haue shut him in . . .  
 . . . Enter Titus Lartius  
Tit. What is become of Martius? . . .  
i. Sol. Following the Flyers at the very heeles,  
 With them he enters: who vpon the sodaine  
 Clapt to their Gates . . .  
Enter Martius bleeding, assaulted by the Enemy . . .  
Lar. Let's fetch him off, or make remaine alike.  
They fight, and all enter the City.

It will be noted that the only cases in which gates (deriving either from dialogue or stage directions) are clearly used are in plays by Shakespeare.<sup>95</sup> Although, as noted above, Reynolds found no evidence for the use of gates at the Red Bull, and the non-Shakespearean examples seem to

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<sup>95</sup>They were not, however, originally written for the same theatre, although the texts are all in the First Folio and may derive from versions used by the Chamberlain's-King's men. The texts are generally accepted as deriving from authorial manuscripts--see Play List.



show authors writing so as to carefully avoid the use of gates within the sight of the audience, it is difficult to dismiss as merely "literary" all the gates that appear in the Shakespeare plays.<sup>96</sup> It seems as though, when writing these plays over a period of years, Shakespeare assumed that some sort of workable representation of gates would be employed in the productions. It is true, however, that none of the scenes require gates, per se, and all of them could be performed with the use of a stage door as "gates."

### The Stage--Tents

Tents are called for in the stage directions and dialogue of several plays. No other set piece causes more of a problem for the staging critic. In a theatre in which the audience sat and stood at several levels on at least three sides of the stage, a tent, even though open at one end, would hide the enclosed actors from the view of a great percentage of the audience. If the tents were left on they would block the actors from the view of some part of the audience at all times. Particularly in the context

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<sup>96</sup> Timon of Athens, although without a battle scene, has a scene at the walls of a town [V.iv]. A Senator "vpon the wals" says "set but thy foot / Against our rampyr'd gates, and they shall ope," shortly after which the Exeunt on the part of the lower stage army is into the city.

of battle scenes, in which a large segment of the stage was required for the spectacle of marching soldiers before, skirmishing soldiers during, and processions of victory afterward, does the existence of a tent or tent-like structure (or two) standing on the open boards seem a very awkward conjecture. And from the viewpoint of actor-economy as well, tents are awkward. Not only would the time taken to erect one (or two) come at the most inopportune moments--moments in which audiences were bursting with suspense and the expectation of a spectacle of some kind--but the procession or spectacle would be diminished by the number of actors required to erect the tent or tents.

From a practical standpoint, tents are most undesirable and unwieldy on the Elizabethan stage. And yet most critics have assumed that they were used. Chambers described elaborate tents, some with doors and locks.<sup>97</sup> Reynolds doubted the majority of Chambers' examples, but still felt that tents were used at times--he especially cited the Bosworth Field scene in Richard III [V.iii].<sup>98</sup> A. M. Nagler, also felt that tents were erected on the stage in Richard III.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup>E. S., III, 53, 106.

<sup>98</sup>Red Bull, 77-78.

<sup>99</sup>Nagler, Shakespeare's Stage, 32-33.

Wickham not only assumed two elaborate tents on-stage during this scene but he envisioned them well out--flanking the stage trap--and on-stage throughout the entire play.<sup>100</sup>

A close examination of the scenes in question raises doubts. Several tents in early Shakespearean stage directions are obviously "literary." In III Henry VI, a stage direction reads "Enter three Watchmen to guard the Kings Tent" [IV.iii]. The entire scene takes place outside the "tent," and when the "tent" is called into play for an exit and re-entry, there is little doubt that one of the doors to the tiring house is used.<sup>101</sup> Again, in the Contention, there is ". . . then enter three or foure, bearing the duke of Buckingham wounded to his Tent" [H<sub>3</sub><sup>V</sup>]. No lines are spoken, and it is apparent that the soldiers and Buckingham merely come in one stage door and go out another. The latter stage direction seems particularly vague for one from an actor's reconstruction, but the incidence of several other "literary" stage directions in both the Contention and True Tragedy<sup>102</sup> leads us to assume that the author of

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<sup>100</sup>Early English Stages, II, pt. 1, 319.

<sup>101</sup>Hosley, "More About Tents on Bosworth Field," 458-9.

<sup>102</sup>Several have already been noted in the above sections on weapons and properties. For others see Greg, Editorial Problem, 159-162.

the stage directions did not always write from a "pure" theatrical viewpoint, but was sometimes carried away by the story.

The reality of a tent in II Tamburlaine is open to question. A sequence in the play begins with the stage direction "Alarme: Amyras and Celebinus issues from the tent where Caliphas sits a sleepe" [112]. Celebinus says "Call foorth our laisie brother from the tent," but Caliphas refuses to come forth. A stage direction reads "Alarme, and Amy. and Celeb, run in" [113]. Caliphus calls or speaks to a fourth character (for whom there is no entrance direction but who has lines to speak in the ensuing section of the scene), and the two play cards. Then, without an exeunt for the card-players, "Enter Tamburlain [and many others]" [114]. After a few moments Tamburlaine inquires about Caliphas and a stage direction reads "He goes in and brings him out."

If, as is assumed by Tucker-Brooke in his edition of the play, there is a missing Exeunt just before the entrance of Tamburlaine, and therefore an implied entrance for Caliphas somewhere early in the scene--probably at the beginning of the argument with his brothers--then there is no need to assume a tent of any kind. The stage direction tent would have been merely literary, and a stage door would have served

for the entrance to it. However, the stage directions as they stand do not warrant Tucker Brooke's assumption. The phrase "Caliphas sits a sleepe" seems particularly theatrical--many stage sleepers used chairs; if the direction had literary roots it would have more likely read "Caliphas lies a sleepe." There is nothing except the length of the argument carried on on both sides of the tent, however, to necessitate anything beyond some sort of "inner stage" or even a doorway.

The circumstances in Richard III [V.iii] require more extensive examination. Shakespeare found it desirable here to represent two camps on stage at the same time, but in doing so he was using the stage in a way in which it apparently had not been used before. There are instances in the seventeenth century of people on-stage unable to see each other because of darkness, but there is no other scene extant, to my knowledge, which presents two wholly distinct groups--each represented as being in a different locale--sharing the stage.<sup>103</sup> Unlike most instances in which foreshortening was used, however, the dialogue gave

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<sup>103</sup>The activity of Diogenes during the time action does not center around his tub is a possible exception (Alexander and Campaspe, a children's company play at Blackfriars, ca. 1584), but we can safely assume that when not "on," the actor playing Diogenes slipped down into the tub and out of sight.

no hint to Shakespeare's audience of what was happening on the stage. The problem, then, is to discover what form of staging was used in order to convey to the audience that there were two camps in two different places. And it is the on-stage tents that cause the difficulty.

At the beginning of the scene, Richard and his forces enter, and a tent is pitched. This establishes the presence of Richard's camp--he and his men exit to survey the field, but the tent stays on. If an actual structure were placed on the stage, as has been assumed by all editors of the play, then when Richmond and his forces enter, the immediate impression would be that he has either stumbled upon Richard's camp, or when he takes no notice of the tent, that he is unable to see it, or that he is represented as being somewhere not within sight of the tent. To some of the slower minds in the audience, Shakespeare's intention might be a long time coming; there is not the slightest hint given by Richmond and his men as to their position or their relation to the on-stage tent. If my assumption is correct that this staging is unique, there would have been no precedent to assist the audience in their orientation. Shakespeare may have realized the problem; after a short speech he has Richmond exit and Richard enter again. This movement, with each group restricting itself to a certain part of the stage,

would be helpful in preparing the audience for the entrance of Richmond while Richard lies asleep on the stage.

If it were not for the repetitious mention of a tent both in the text and in stage directions, the problem might be more easily resolved. And there is reason to believe that some, at least, of this talk can be discounted. Reynolds repeatedly warned us to suspect the existence of any property which is described over fully, or is repeatedly mentioned.<sup>104</sup> He submitted that the Elizabethan audience imagined whatever the author suggested to them, and that the mention of a property in the text or a stage direction is no proof that it was actually present. With Reynolds as a guide we might guess that in referring three times in fourteen lines to his tent, Richard doth protest too much.

The Folio and the Quarto texts differ considerably in their mention of tents. The Folio reads "They withdraw into the Tent" [V.iii.46] at the first exit of Richmond, and "Enter the Lords to Richmond sitting in his Tent" [V.iii.222] at the end of the dream sequence. The whole of the first direction, and "sitting in his Tent" in the second, are absent from the Quarto text. A third direction, occurring after Richard falls asleep, "Enter Derby to Richmond in his Tent" [V.iii.78], is common to both texts. The Quarto

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<sup>104</sup>Reynolds, Red Bull, 42-48.

text, thought to be reflective of actual stage use either as theater copy or reported text,<sup>105</sup> makes us wonder if the tents in the Folio stage directions are theatrical or literary. If the latter, then the staging was probably handled in a way quickly grasped by the audience.

There was a tradition for multiple staging that came up through mystery plays, the staging at court, and probably into public theatres in such plays as Comedy of Errors.<sup>106</sup> Plays staged in this tradition used a different door for each locale or domus, and each scene was localized by the door the actors came through or approached. Each door could represent a domus quite distant from the others, with the audience turning a blind eye to the doors not in use.<sup>107</sup> If multiple staging was used here, with Richard's tent a door,<sup>108</sup> and the erection of the tent some act of draping, covering, or adorning it, the audience would be

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<sup>105</sup>See Play List.

<sup>106</sup>Chambers, E. S., III, 25, 43, 142; Reynolds, Red Bull, 131-54.

<sup>107</sup>For an extended examination of this idea and its relation to the Elizabethan theatre see L. A. Triebel, "Sixteenth Century Stagecraft in European Drama," MLQ, XI (1950), 7-16.

<sup>108</sup>Reynolds, "Troilus and Cressida on the Elizabethan Stage," 231, gave this as a possible explanation for the tents in Troilus.



perfectly prepared to accept, without surprise or puzzlement, the entrance of Richmond. Richard could exit (and later so could Richmond), and the audience would be on familiar ground. The door would be Richard's tent when he or one of his men was on-stage, but it would figuratively not exist for any other scene. The same would be true of another door representing Richmond's tent.<sup>109</sup>

A stage door, designated in some way as a "tent," can in fact easily fulfill the dramatic demands of all stage tents. The doors and locks on elaborate tents envisioned by Chambers are much more likely to have been on stage doors, and the multiplicity of tents that he envisioned in Troilus and Cressida<sup>110</sup> would seem to have been tailor-made for the tradition of multiple staging.

The early booth-stage, with its already tent-like, hanging-draped tiring-house, had a built-in 'tent' always available at the rear of the platform. Richard Southern found no evidence that, in early plays or interludes, tents were ever more than doors.<sup>111</sup> As was pointed out by C. W. Hodges, the relationship between the Greek word skēnē (tent)

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<sup>109</sup>Cf. Fusillo, "Tents on Bosworth Field," 193-4.

<sup>110</sup>E. S., III, 106.

<sup>111</sup>Seven Ages of the Theatre, 138-9.

and the theatrical scene was apparently more than merely linguistic as late as 1599: Platter referred to the tiring-house as "the tent" and Hodges assumed from this that the arras or curtain-hung tiring-house still retained something of the character of the original booth.<sup>112</sup> Richard Hosley's recent suggestion that the 'hangings' were before the entrance doors seems quite in keeping with the earlier tradition, and with the well-known frontispiece to Kirkman's The Wits.<sup>113</sup> Such an adornment would look similar to the heavily draped doors--so draped to prevent draughts--in many old British homes. With such an arrangement, not even extra drapery would have been necessary to establish stage doors as tents.

The only problem occurs in the entrances and exits that follow the establishment of the tents. Richard, after he calls for his tent to be pitched, leaves to "survey the vantage of the ground." He would not, logically--especially in the context of this "difficult" scene--be able to leave the stage via a door that had just been established as his tent, nor would he be able to exit through the door that Richmond and his forces enter immediately afterward. Two

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<sup>112</sup>Hodges, Globe Restored, 51-2.

<sup>113</sup>Hosley, "Shakespearian Stage Curtains," 488-92.

stage-door "tents," therefore tacitly require a third door. It is tempting to argue on the basis of the above evidence, that the case for a third door for Richard III is very strong.

C. W. Hodges, one of an increasing number of critics who question the existence of an "inner stage,"<sup>114</sup> suggested that a temporary structure may have been used in some plays--he particularly suggested Antony and Cleopatra.<sup>115</sup> The structure, he postulated, was placed against the center of the tiring house wall; it had a roof strong enough to support a few people, and had curtained sides. It was very much like the usually imagined inner stage pushed out on to the stage and with curtains therefore on three sides. It would not have been portable, but would have stood for the entire performance. Although Hodges did not suggest the use of this structure as a tent, it could easily have served as one. With the curtains pulled back, the encircling audience would have had a fair view into it, and because it was against the rear wall there would have been a good deal of open stage upon which spectacles could proceed unobstructed.

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<sup>114</sup>Cf. Reynolds, Red Bull, 100, et passim; "Was There a 'Tarras' in Shakespeare's Globe?," 97-100; Warren Smith, "Evidence of Scaffolding on Shakespeare's Stage," 22-9.

<sup>115</sup>Hodges, Globe Restored, 56-61.

Such a structure would have served for the tents in Julius Caesar and Henry V--scenes which are followed by a stage full of soldiers--and for Rape of Lucrece [245], in a sequence immediately preceded by a scene with two armies and "Horatio at the Bridge." Such a structure seems to be required by the 'Platt' of Seven Deadly Sins, which begins with "A tent being plast on the stage for Henry the Sixt. He in it asleepe."<sup>116</sup> The rest of the play appears to be made up of a series of spectacles, processions, and playlets that are performed before Henry.

Although the general question of tents on the Elizabethan stage undoubtedly needs further investigation, it seems safe to state that in spite of occasional literary lapses in stage directions, there is no conclusive evidence that tents stood out on the open stage during battle scenes.

#### The Stage--Trojan Horse

Another set piece which, if brought on to the stage as a three dimensional object, would have cluttered up the stage during ensuing scenes of spectacle, is the Trojan Horse in II Iron Age [371-85]. The text is just ambiguous enough, however, to leave room for speculation.

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<sup>116</sup>Greg, Dramatic Documents, I, B<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>.

The second act opens with the Trojans examining the deserted Greek camp. After lengthy discussion there is:

The Horse is discovered.

AEne. Soft, what huge Engine's that left on the strond,  
That beares the shape and figure of an Horse. [372]

The Trojans exit to prepare an entry place into the city for the horse. Synon, a Greek spy, speaks of "A thousand men in Armes" in the horse, and then exits. An army of Greeks enters as though outside the walls of Troy. Synon enters "aboue" with a torch and exits. The Greeks see the signal and know by this that the horse is within the city. They prepare to sneak into the town. The text then reads:

They march softly in at one doore, and presently in at another. Enter Synon with a stealing pace, holding the key in his hand.

Syn. Soft, soft, ey so, hereafter Ages tell,  
How Synons key vnlockt the gates of Hell.

Pyrhus, Diomed, and the rest, leape from out the Horse,  
And as if groping in the darke, meete with Agamemnon  
and the rest . . . [379-80]

No further mention is made of the horse.

At the beginning of the sequence, when the horse was as yet undiscovered, the plot calls for the Trojans to be walking about an open field and to notice the horse. The "discovery" would therefore appear to be purely theatrical: Heywood apparently had in mind for the horse to be hidden from view and to be suddenly and dramatically discovered. No matter how the horse may have been constructed--and

Hodges suggested that it may have only been a painted backdrop<sup>117</sup>--it is not likely to have been anywhere except against the tiring house wall. The plot and dialogue draw attention to its immobility: the Trojans leave it to prepare an opening for it, and the Greeks march on and off the stage in order to show their change of place, but the horse stays put all the while. If it was within an "inner stage" of some kind, a curtain may have been drawn during the first part of the scene showing the Greeks, and may perhaps have been drawn again after the descent from the horse.

#### The Stage--Chair of State

If there is no positive evidence for the use of the base of the "state" during battle scenes, in at least two instances the chair itself is on the stage. One is in Alphonsus of Aragon, a play probably performed in a Public theatre. In the midst of scenes of battle in which there are fights and group skirmishes on the stage, a group of nobles and soldiers march on to the stage, and enact a coronation scene in which a stage direction reads "Alphonsus sit in the Chaire" [475]. In Sophonisba, a private theatre

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<sup>117</sup>Hodges, Globe Restored, 74.

play, during a post-battle single combat scene one of the characters sits on a "throne" [57]. If the "State" was too cumbersome to be carried on and off the stage (or to be raised and lowered from the "Heavens") each time it was needed, and it was not hidden within an "inner stage," we can at least assume that it was placed against the tiring house wall, and was more or less out of the way during battle spectacles.<sup>118</sup>

In a recent book, Bernard Beckerman suggested that stools were left scattered about the stage for the actors to sit upon.<sup>119</sup> Aside from the incongruous appearance they would make on a 'battlefield,' they could be a real hazard to fast-moving actors in excursions and other group activities.

### Naval Gear

L. B. Wright once wrote that he thought that the stage

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<sup>118</sup>McManaway, "Richard II at Covent Garden," 174. In spite of Reynolds' lengthy arguments for the frequent use of the front stage for thrones at the Red Bull and other theatres [Red Bull, 56-65], it is difficult to believe that such a sight-obstructing object would have been left on the open stage when it was not needed. Again, the question of actor-economy is raised: whenever a spectacle involving large groups of actors is either in progress or about to take place, it becomes impractical to waste any men on the movement of properties that can just as well be originally placed where moving will not be needed.

<sup>119</sup>Shakespeare at the Globe, 78.

was decked out with simple rigging, rope ladders, etc. during shipboard scenes.<sup>120</sup> Although the proximity of the Thames to most theatres would have given easy access to such equipment, there is no evidence to support its use in battle scenes.

There is a dialogue call to "let downe the fights" at the beginning of a sea battle in Daborne's Christian Turned Turk [196]. Fights were cloth screens, usually colored, that were used during naval engagements to hide the men on deck from enemy fire.<sup>121</sup> It would, of course, have been possible for some sort of cloth screen to be dropped from the upper stage, but there is no further suggestion of fights in the play, and the phrase, appearing as it does in a speech full of "naval" phrases, was probably intended merely for color.

### The Stage--Conclusions

Although, as previous chapters have shown, we can hardly agree with C. M. Haines that battle scenes do not require properties,<sup>122</sup> it is quite true to say that they

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<sup>120</sup>Elizabethan Sea Drama," 112.

<sup>121</sup>Shakespeare's England, I, 163, and OED.

<sup>122</sup>Development of Shakespeare's Stagecraft, 48.



require the simplest of stages. It might seem that they were so written in order to eliminate the problems found in touring--a company could not expect unusual structural features in provincial "theatres," nor would they probably wish to carry large properties about with them. But other scenes in many of the same plays make more structural and property demands than do the battle scenes. Perhaps, as seems both likely and logical, the stage was kept clear and unencumbered so that performers would have room to present elaborate pre-battle, battle, and post-battle spectacles.

It has long been fashionable to admonish the critics of the last century because they visualized the Elizabethan theatre in terms of the "picture-frame" stage that they were used to. All critics, of course, have to face the danger of too much projection of self and their own time. It is quite possible that some modern critics are the victims of such thinking: Hotson's attempts to surround the Elizabethan stage with the audience occasionally suggests a justification of modern arena theatres, and many of the bare, open Elizabethan stages may be influenced by the bare open stages of 1920 Germany. There are still more than a few vestiges of "picture-frame" thinking in the attitudes of many modern "formalist" critics. An open, rather bare platform, with an audience on at least three sides and

three levels, would not be as conducive to symmetrical staging and tableaux as would a "picture-frame" stage. The widespread audience would necessitate a constant shifting of actors in order to both permit all to be seen and to project the story to all parts of the theatre. Critics of the arena stage complain that the actors spin around like tops. Although this is an exaggeration (at least about the better performances), it is quite true to say that a director in such a theatre has to worry less about "pictures" and more about the fact that an actor's back is always facing some part of the audience. A "pose" becomes meaningless under such circumstances, and such a theatre is necessarily one of movement and action. Symmetry, balance, and design would be meaningful only for the few in front, at a level high enough to see it.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE BATTLES CONTINUE: ON-STAGE FIGHTING

While the main part of the battle rages out of sight a variety of battle-related activities occur on the stage, ranging from full-scale clashes of armies in skirmish, down through brawls, fights, excursions of all kinds of people connected with the battle, to the depiction of watching and waiting people. Few scenes were limited to but one or two such activities, and they were used in a multiplicity of permutations from play to play and from scene to scene. The next two chapters will examine each convention in isolation (as much as is possible) and examine some of the typical ways they were combined.

The most interesting manifestation in battle scenes, for both its spectacular value and the variety of problems implicit for the producer, is the depiction of fighting. Group fighting, which we shall define as the on-stage clash of non-enumerated soldiers; fights, in which three or more specifically named men pair off and fight; and duels, occur with great frequency.

Of the seventy-five plays that depict land battles, forty-six clearly include some type of on-stage fighting.<sup>1</sup> Of these, twenty-eight--or about 60%--have at least one clear sequence of group-fighting. (Several have more than one: there are forty-eight in all.)<sup>2</sup> The other eighteen have a total of thirty-one ambiguous sequences that might be group fighting.<sup>3</sup> If we discount the ambiguous texts, and look at the figures from two perspectives, we find that two-thirds of the plays that depict land battles include group-fighting, and that two-thirds of all land battles (on or off-stage) include such fighting.

When two armies clash on the stage, we might expect extensive stage directions to assist the actors through what can easily be a confusing and dangerous sequence. Such is not generally the case.

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<sup>1</sup>Twenty-two include off-stage (although not necessarily empty-stage) battles, and seven have such ambiguous texts that interpretation is impossible.

<sup>2</sup>Three (II Robin Hood, Ed. Ironside, Coriolanus) and perhaps a fourth (Battle of Alcasar) have two separate group clashes in one battle, and Lust's Dominion has three. All but one of the twenty-eight have valid external evidence to connect them with public theatre performance.

<sup>3</sup>These shall be examined below. Seven seem quite likely to be group-fighting, and only five can be easily dismissed.

Some are almost bare. In I Edward IV, the defenders of a city merely "issue forth and repulse [the invaders]" [31]; in another scene there is "a very fierie assault on all sides" [20]; in Four Prentices, two on-stage armies "Ioyne Battle" [244]; in Travels (in two dumb-show-like frays) there is "A Battell presented" [ $A_3^V$ ], and "A Christian battell showne" [ $A_4^R$ ]; in Golden Age, on-stage armies meet with no more than "The battels ioine" [50 & 74]; and in Lust's Dominion<sup>4</sup> there is "Alarum, and a Battal" [ $E_5^R$ ]; and in another sequence two armies "ioine" [ $E_{10}^R$ ]. In what may be an on-stage clash of two armies in I Jeronimo, "the Portugales and Spaniards meete." [328-9]

The texts are usually more explicit. Fight appears often in this context, and is found throughout the period. In Horestes, two armies are told to "fyght a good whil" [ $D_1^V$ ]; in Lochrine we twice find "Let them fight" [797 & 832]; in Edmond Ironside--a generally theatrical text--there is twice "they fight" [963 & 1567]; in II Henry VI, at a point where the text leads us to believe that two armies

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<sup>4</sup>The text of which derives from what has been called a non-theatrical MS [Bowers, Dramatic Works of Dekker, IV, 117]. It is, however, attributed to Day, Haughton, and Dekker, who would have written from a theatrical viewpoint. The stage directions are theatrical in tone.

have just confronted on the stage, there is "Alarums to the fight" [IV.ii-iii]; in II Robin Hood, on-stage armies are instructed to "fight," and, after a brief pause, to "Fight againe" [G<sub>2</sub><sup>V</sup>]; and in Julius Caesar--the text of which is considered to be of prompt-copy origin--two small contingents, meeting in the midst of a battle, "fight." [V.iv]<sup>5</sup>

Fight is too ambiguous to be of much help. At best, we can venture that it means some form of physical action. It rarely appears alone, however, and stage directions usually go on to give further development. Highlights of the battle are often noted, and description is often given of the manner in which the armies exit. Among them are captures. In Horestes there is "thē take hym [the enemy leader] & let Horestes drau him vyolentlye" [D<sub>2</sub><sup>R</sup>]; in II Robin Hood there is "Matilda taken, led by the haire by two Souldiers" [G<sub>2</sub><sup>V</sup>]; in a later large-scale skirmish in the same play "Queen taken, Matilda rescued" [G<sub>3</sub><sup>R</sup>]; and in Shoemaker a Gentleman [G<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup>] and in Lovesick King [G<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup>] a leader is

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<sup>5</sup>Others are: I Edward IV, "They fight" [28]; Trial of Chivalry, "they fight" (three times) [I<sub>1</sub><sup>R-V</sup>]; Coriolanus, the text of which is considered to be from foul papers prepared for production, "They fight" [I.iv]; Lovesick King, wounded soldiers "rise and fight" [4]; Shoemaker a Gentleman, [F<sub>4</sub><sup>R</sup>], and Valiant Welshman [B<sub>3</sub><sup>V</sup>], "fight"; James IV (in a dumb-show), "Enter two battailes strongly fighting" [655]; and Histrion-Mastix, "Enter all the factions of Noblemen, Peasants, and cittizens fighting" [291].

taken prisoner in the midst of battle.

In Locrine [833], Golden Age [50], and Lovesick King [ $G_1^V$ ], single men are called for to be killed. In II Henry VI, two men--"the Staffords"--are slain [IV.11-111], and later in the play we find "Mathew Goffe is slain, and all the rest" [IV.vii]. Some people are merely hurt: in Locrine there is "let Strumbo fall downe" [834], and in James IV "her Crowne is taken, and she hurt" [656-7]. Other directions for business in the midst of group fighting call for a previously undecided man to join forces with another, in Edmond Ironside [1591-2], and for a father to rescue his surrounded son, in I Henry VI. [IV.vi]

Certain terms appear to deal with the manner of exits. Two especially--beat and drive--are common. In Edmond Ironside, "Edmond drives Canutus offe the stage" [963-4]. In I Edward IV, the stage direction "the rebels driue them back" [28] empties the stage. Although the phrases vary slightly--"drive in" in Lust's Dominion [ $E_{10}^R$ ] and Trial of Chivalry [ $1_1^R$ ]; "driue out" and "driuen out" in Travels [ $A_3^V$  &  $A_4^R$ ] and Lovesick King [50 & 4], and "drive off" in Shoemaker [ $F_4^R$ ]-the stage seems always to be completely emptied by the term "drive."

Such is not always the case with "beat." In Four Prentices we find "The Christians are beaten off. The

Soldan victoriously leades off his Souldiers marching" [244]. In two sequences in Valiant Welshman, one man remains on the stage: "Claudius [and soldiers] beates them in" [D<sub>2</sub><sup>F</sup>], and Claudius remains to confront a new entrant in a duel. At another point "Monmouth [and soldiers] beates them in" [B<sub>3</sub><sup>V</sup>] and Monmouth stays on the stage to be confronted by one man. In Lust's Dominion and Hector of Germany the term is followed by an exeunt: in Lust's Dominion there is "Moors are all beat in, Exeunt omnes, manet Eleazar weary" [E<sub>7</sub><sup>V</sup>], and in Hector there is "They are beaten off by the Bastards side, & exeunt" [A<sub>4</sub><sup>V</sup>].<sup>6</sup> Whereas drive seems to call for both groups to exit fighting, beat usually seems to call for one group to exit while some or all of the (momentary) victors stay on.

A difficult sequence in Coriolanus fits here, and some of the ambiguity of the scene may be explained by the occurrence of beat in a stage direction. Martius and his force are on-stage at the beginning of I.iv when the Volscian

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<sup>6</sup> Later in Hector an almost identical sequence may include a printing house error. Two armies are on the stage and we find:

Exeunt omnes.  
Alarum, The Bastards side beaten off. [D<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup>]

It looks as though the two lines of type were reversed.



force enters. The latter stand while Martius addresses his men. Then "Alarum, the Romans are beat back to their Trenches." Martius and his men immediately re-enter and he addresses them. There is no exit given for the Volscian force, nor any stage direction for their re-entry, and they are on-stage at the end of Martius' speech, for Martius then "followes them to gates." It seems likely that here too, the group that engaged in the act of beating--the Volscies--did not follow the beaten group of Romans off the stage, but merely retired back to the gates and awaited the second onslaught.<sup>7</sup>

Several other terms suggest the dominance of one army over another. In Lust's Dominion, "the Moor prevails" [E<sub>5</sub><sup>V</sup>]; in Trial of Chivalry [I<sub>1</sub><sup>F</sup>] and in Jeronimo [329], groups are "put to the worst;" in Trial of Chivalry a group is "chaste away [I<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup>]; in Golden Age, two armies are "repulst" [50 & 74]; "give back" occurs in Lochrine [823-3]; and "gives" in Edmond Ironside. [1567-8]

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<sup>7</sup>There are two possible exceptions to this general use: in Valiant Welshman [I<sub>2</sub><sup>V</sup>] and in Rape of Lucrece [242], directions with "beat" appear to be followed by an empty stage. The term is also used in an assault scene in I Henry VI but the impression is that all the fighting occurs off-stage, perhaps in the door-way [I.ii]. See Assaults, below, p. 355.

Several early plays call for one force to flee after the fighting has begun. In Horrestes there is "let sum of Egistus mē flye" [ $D_1^V$ ] and the victors remain; in a dumb-show in James IV one leader, at least, "flies" [656]; in True Tragedy the Yorkist force "flies" [ $H_1^R$ ], leaving the victorious force on-stage; and in Edmond Ironside a probably synecdochic stage direction reads, "Edmund flies: exeunt" [1593]. The phraseology of these stage directions suggests a pattern in which one group weakens and retires from the stage in some form of rout, leaving the victors to dominate the stage momentarily before pursuit.<sup>8</sup>

Stage directions do not tell us much about the manner of stage fighting, but it is possible, with the information we have about English weapons and custom, to conjecture something about the manner of English fighting in general, and to deduce the probable manner of stage fighting. Although the rapier had made, by nature of its superiority, great inroads into public life--especially for private, non-military use--it was considered foreign, and not in the English tradition. However, the difference between the Elizabethan sword and the Elizabethan rapier was not as

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<sup>8</sup>A pattern similar to the usual one with beat. It is probably only coincidence that flee occurs in early plays and beat in later ones.

pronounced as many descriptions would lead us to believe. Both were flat, with cutting edges and sharp points. The important difference was in weight. The sword was a heavy, thick weapon that could be used for chopping as well as cutting. It could, when wielded forcefully, chop through bone and thick obstructions such as wood braces, tree branches, and even light metal. The rapier was too light for such work: it could cut--it was usually quite sharp--but would be stopped by bone of any thickness. Its virtue, however, was the added quickness and agility its light weight gave it. The swordsman was a man of brawn, prepared to batter his way through physical obstruction and literally to beat and chop his victims; the rapier man depended on speed and subtlety. The English, bred on beef and porridge, considered themselves swordsmen.

The same old-stock citizenry that considered the rapier unsuited to the English character thought the pike equally unsuited, and preferred the then almost obsolete bill. Here again, the difference between the two weapons was primarily one of manner in which they were wielded. The bill--much like an axe--was used in a swinging, chopping fashion, and broke as much as it cut. The pike--the "gentleman's" weapon--kept its user at a great distance from his foe, was usually used not as a solo weapon but in concord with

many other pikes, and was a thrusting tool.

The "English" weapons, then, were those that called for strength, broad "manly" gestures, and a great deal of vigorous, untiring movement. It seems likely that the character of traditional English warfare decorum would have often found its way into stage battles. It would have had more vivid visual and aural appeal than a more subtle approach, and a strong patriotic appeal.<sup>9</sup> And it would have produced the "horrid noise of target fighting" as swords and other weapons were banged against shields and against each other.

#### On-Stage Clashes--A Special Effect

In the majority of cases, battles between armies are rather straightforward: they meet, fight, one generally prevails, and the two armies move off the stage to continue the battle out of sight. Several authors add a factor, and have a third force enter the fray--usually changing the tide of battle.

In Locrine, Humber instructs his lieutenant to wait until the middle of the battle, and then to assault the

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<sup>9</sup>The term beat particularly, a word that reflects a swinging, smacking, battering activity, seems most suited to such an interpretation. Drive, as well, (especially in the light of its association with propulsion of livestock with sticks and crooks) seems open to such an interpretation.

enemy from the rear. The enemy (led by Albanact and including Debon and Strombo) meets Humber and his force, and the stage direction reads:

Sound alarme, then let them fight, Humber giue backe, Hubba enter at their backs, and kill Debon, let Strumbo fall downe, Albanact run in, and afterwards enter [defeated]. [832-5]<sup>10</sup>

Trial of Chivalry includes a long sequence in which two battling armies are interrupted by a group of peacemakers. The armies are on-stage: "they fight, Fraunce put to the worst, enters [friends of France] and [the opponents are] driuen in." The peacemakers appear and stop the French from pursuit, and fight with them. The opponents re-appear and side with the peacemakers, and "Fraunce chaste away." Reinforcements did not always turn the tide: in Lovesick King, a group of the King's wounded soldiers are on the stage. The enemy enters and "the wounded souldiers rise and fight, to them [re-enter the King, his lieutenants, and soldiers] who are driven out and the King slain?" [4]

A similar sequence seems to occur in John of Bordeaux. Although the text is far from explicit, it is apparent that

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<sup>10</sup> The same occurs in a perhaps synecdochic stage direction in Edmond Ironside:

Enter Edmund chaseinge of Canutus Edricus backes Canutus Edmund flies: exeunt . . . [1590-2].

See below, p. 314.

some form of battle representation was intended. The sleeping Emperor Frederick is shown a vision which is conjured up by the magician Bacon. Bacon says:

. . . I chardg the sho to sleping fredrick the  
tropes and Corranet<s of turkies horse show him  
the battayles of great Ameroth and phobeter in  
thy war like frounes bring Iohn of Burdiox and  
his soulders forth show him the Combat and the  
doutful wictorie Ioyne you in on morphebus  
phobeter and eisalon et fyet spectator omnian  
fredricke

At this point a stage direction reads:

Exent Bacon to bring in the showes as you knowe

and the text continues,

	<u>sound a sennett</u>
<u>[Emperor]</u>	bass velian why retirest thow
<u>[Vandermast]</u>	what sayes your heignes
<u>[Em]peror</u>	ha son my sperit was not here but a revenna in the battall was my soull but wher is Bacon
<u>[V]ander</u>	he is gon my Lord
<u>Emperor</u>	ha vander mast as in my sleape I laye I saw great Ameroth in royalltie marching with mani thowsand Iannsaries redie to geve assallt vnto the tounne but Iohn of Burdiox breking of ther sacke ferfull to fyght with in a gardid wall, set op the gates and mad a sallie forth, and sett vpon the turkes with such resoulve that at fyrst the pagens fled the feld, but with a squadern of approved men the Basshawes enter lind ther weried slaves and gave a whotter chardg vpon ser Iohn so that the knight was forced to retier fo <sup>r</sup> veri grefe to se Lord Burdiox flye I star vp and waking from my dremes crid out bass velan why retirest thowe

[435-467]

It seems a safe conjecture that the "showes as you knowe" were intended to portray a Turkish army before a town, from which came forth John of Bordeaux's army. There ensued a fight which the Turks at first lost, but after Turkish reinforcements joined the fray Bordeaux's army fled the field, probably pursued by the Turks.

Such sequences, aside from requiring a fairly large group of actors, might be difficult for an audience unless the identity of the third group is made quite clear. In each but the last case, the playwrights have been careful to present all the groups separately before the sequence in question; and in John of Bordeaux it is likely that the Turks were identified by some form of costume or accessories.

Most stage directions that deal with entrances of groups in some form of battle activity list major characters first. Such structure probably reflects a natural tendency of playwright and prompter to think in terms of degree, and Elizabethan generals were expected to lead the fight.<sup>11</sup> But there was probably an expedient theatrical reason for major characters to enter at the fore: inasmuch as supers were used in large groups, it would have been necessary for characters known to the audience to enter first.

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<sup>11</sup>Shakespeare's England, I, 119.

### On-Stage Battles--Some Problems and Conjectures

The following section will attempt to deal with several problems related to the clash of on-stage armies.

#### Synecdochic Stage Directions

One group of stage directions seems to throw light on the mind of the playwright at work, for they include what seems to be a kind of theatrical synecdoche. In most instances it is apparent that when a stage direction calls for two men to fight, only two men fight--the context permits no other interpretation. But in a few cases the name of one or two leaders is used to represent an entire force. For example, in Valiant Welshman we find: "Enter at one dore Monmouth with Souldiers, at the other Codigune: they fight: Monmouth beates them in" [ $B_3^V$ ]. The "them" that are beaten in quite obviously refers to a group of soldiers denoted by "Codigune;" the play has already shown Codigune at the head of a force of men, and it is easy to see a kind of authorial shorthand here.

Similar stage directions are found in other plays. In Trial of Chivalry, the French army is twice beaten off the stage with stage directions that read "Fraunce put to the worst" [ $I_1^F$ ], and "Fraunce chaste away" [ $I_1^V$ ]. In Travels of the Three English Brothers, Robert and Anthony divide their



followers into two groups in order to demonstrate the manner of Christian battles. A stage direction then reads:

A Christian battell showne betweene the two  
Brothers, Robert driven out, then enter S.  
Anthonie and the rest with the other part  
prisoners. [A<sub>4</sub>r]

Here, Robert is used to denote his entire force.

In I Edward IV a large contingent of rebels, headed by their leader, attempt to enter a city. The stage direction reads, "As he marches, thinking to enter Shore and his Soldiers issue forth and repulse him" [31]. Again, the "he" represents an entire force. In the earlier and less reliable text of Locrine, two armies are on the stage--the forces of Humber and the forces of Albanact. A stage direction reads:

then let them fight, Humber giue backe, Hubba enter  
at their [Albanact's] backs, and . . . Albanact run  
in. [832-4]

The dialogue, before and after, makes the action fairly clear--the forces of Humber give back until rescued by the forces of Hubba. The latter rather muddled text seems to demonstrate that such synecdochic notation was not the result of a convention, nor even a conscious action on the writer's part. His mind, on other things, tended to see the groups in terms of their captains. It was suggested above that leaders invariably appear at the beginning of stage directions for purposes of identification. Such structure coupled

with these synecdochic directions may further imply that many authors tended to see battles in terms of the leaders, and that supers added support and spectacle only.<sup>12</sup>

Many so-called "incomplete" stage directions may be explained by this synecdochal attitude. One that immediately comes to mind is the entrance of Prince John, in II Henry IV

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<sup>12</sup>Several places in Edmond Ironside may be synecdochal, but leave room for other interpretations. During a battle which involves, according to stage directions, leaders and groups of lords and soldiers, a stage direction reads: "Enter Edmund chaseinge of Canutus Edricus backes Canutus Edmund flies: exeunt" [1590-93]. This appears, out of context, to call for the movement of but three men. But Canutus and Edricus immediately re-enter, and Canutus says that he would have lost "hadst Thou not backed vs w<sup>th</sup> thie warlike troopes." Later, when Edricus speaks of the incident, he refers to his intent to "assaile the reward w<sup>th</sup> my band" [1704]. Any interpretation must develop out of a subjective attitude toward the play. The dumb-shows, the so-called Senecan qualities that critics have found in the play, and its early date, might lead us to assume that only three men were intended to appear, and that they were symbolic rather than entirely representational. But the wide range of physical activities in the play, the feeling that the play was basically spectacular in quality, and the knowledge that in other parts of the play there are full-scale on-stage battles between groups of men, might lead us to assume that the stage direction is an example of synecdoche. At another point two armies are on the stage. A stage direction reads "Alarum they fight Edmund drives Canutus offe the stage" [963-4]. Does the driving off-stage of Canutus reflect a synecdochal usage for the two battling armies--which must be off the stage at the end of the direction--or is it a particular detail of staging that the author wished to point up? Perhaps the question is only academic, for both are undoubtedly included: it would be almost automatic for the two leaders to fight, and there is only this direction to instruct the armies to exit fighting.

[IV.ii]. Although the dialogue, the context, and the Quarto stage direction require him to be accompanied by an army, the Folio stage direction reads only "Enter Prince Iohn." Some critics have predicated a barren Elizabethan stage, peopled with symbolic characters--it may be that only the synecdochic stage directions were symbolic and bare.

The "True Tragedy" and a Theory of Army Placement

In True Tragedy, an extended stage direction may give a hint about the manner in which opposing forces were deployed. The Queen's army is on-stage in pitched array. The York army enters, and the groups prepare to fight. The text reads:

Alarmes to the Battaile, Yorke flies, then the Chambers be discharged. Then enter the King [York], Cla. Glo. and the rest, and make a great shout, and crie; For Yorke, for Yorke: and then the Queene is taken, the Prince, Oxford, and Sum. & then sound, & enter all againe. [H<sup>1</sup>]

This appears to call for the following order of events: the forces meet and fight, and the Yorkists flee the stage, leaving at least the leaders of the Queen's force on the stage. The off-stage chambers go off, and a group of Yorkists re-enter and capture the on-stage group. Then the rest of the Yorkist force comes on to the stage again.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>The parallel stage directions in III Henry VI are not exactly the same:

The general effect is that, although the forces meet on the stage and (at least part of) the Queen's visible force stays on after the first clash, the York army meets the main body of the Queen's army off-stage, and conquers it.<sup>14</sup> From a 'realistic' point of view, or from any point of view that attempts to make this staging explicable to an audience, it is apparent that although forces meet and clash on the stage, the audience is to imagine that other members of the forces are off-stage. This suggests a hint about the alignment of forces on the stage. If they were to take their stands at right angles to the tiring house wall, with part of each force immediately in a doorway, it would be easy to imagine that the armies continued off into the distance. The effect of a large force could be obtained, and it would concomitantly be imagined that the battle began all along the line at once--on and off the stage. Such a staging would, as suggested in an earlier chapter [p. 148], work quite well in all cases in which two

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Alarum, Retreat, Excursions. Exeunt.  
Flourish, Enter Edward, Richard, Queene, Clarence,  
Oxford, Somerset.

For a comment on this and the implication of the discrepancy, see below, p. 442.

<sup>14</sup>The sudden shift in the tide of battle while the heretofore victorious group stays on the stage is a unique piece of staging in extant texts.

armies fight on the stage after alignment, and would fit perfectly with the usually intended illusion that the stage was but a section of the battlefield.

Some Problem Sequences--On or Off Stage?

We have already noted the King in John of Bordeaux who sees an on-stage battle in his sleep. Seven Deadly Sins, a play from about the same time and which may have belonged to the same company, might have included a similar scene. The "plot" apparently calls for a king to be shown a series of visions, one of which includes a battle. Two armies enter, one man enters "in The midst between," the king speaks, and then there is "A Larum w<sup>th</sup> Excurtions [35]. This suggests that the armies fought at least the beginnings of a battle in sight of the audience. However, exits are not listed in the "plot" and it is therefore impossible to know if the action was unbroken or not.

In II Henry VI, a sequence begins with two armies on the stage. The leader--Stafford--of one group (and presumably his followers) exits. The rebels remain and prepare for battle. The Folio reads:

But. They are all in order, and march toward vs.  
Cade. But then are we in order, when we are  
 most out of order. Come, march forward.

Alarums to the fight, wherein both the Staffords  
 are slaine. [IV.ii-iii]

The Contention is substantially the same, except for the very important addition of an Exeunt immediately before the fight.

Later in the play, Cade's army exits to fight a gathering force. The text reads:

Alarums. Mathew Goffe is slain, and all the rest.<sup>15</sup>  
Then enter Iacke Cade, with his Company. [IV.vii]

In the first instance the "correct" version is not immediately discoverable. Cairncross concluded that although the Contention derived from the same origin as the Folio, the Folio stage directions derived from the Contention stage directions.<sup>16</sup> Even if such a relationship were certain, we could not know if the omission of the Exeunt in the Folio is an error or a correction of an error; and if a correction, whether it was stimulated by an original error in the Contention printing house, or by a change in production methods over the years. (I have already discussed the oft-recurring phrase "Alarums to the fight" and my feeling that it appears when an army comes on to the stage to battle with an already on-stage group.)

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<sup>15</sup>Contention reads:

Alarums, and then Mathew Goffe is slain, and  
al the rest with him: then enter Iacke  
Cade again, and his company. [G<sub>1</sub>v]

<sup>16</sup>Cairncross, II Henry VI, xxxix.

The death of the Staffords is nowhere mentioned in the ensuing dialogue; and Mathew Goffe is not only not mentioned after his death, but does not even appear in the play, and is only fleetingly mentioned in an earlier scene. It is difficult to imagine how these deaths were transmitted to the audience if the battles were fought entirely off-stage.

These stage directions seem to be, in fact, direct instructions about the staging of events that someone (probably the author) wanted made known to the audience. In the absence of dialogue, it would have been necessary to play these sequences on the stage, perhaps in excursions. One apparently unanswerable question remains--how was Mathew Goffe, who had not previously been seen or lately mentioned, identified even if the scene was played in view of the audience?

Although editors have not come to any unanimity of judgement about these sequences, the Folio text presents no real problems. In the first sequence, Cade's army is on-stage, Stafford's army enters, they fight and the Staffords are killed, the armies continue to fight as they exit (the rebels beating off the Stafford group), and then Cade's group re-enters. The second sequence is similar, except that the two groups enter fighting, and we have what amounts to a large-scale excursion.

A sequence that involves a perhaps missing exeunt appears in I Troublesome Reign. Two on-stage armies confront and challenge each other to battle. Then there is "Excursions" and the pursuit of one heretofore on-stage character by another [ $C_4^R$ ]. "Excursions"--a term we have seen to mean an activity that begins off-stage--hints that the battle is intended to begin off-stage, but no exeunt precedes it. Subsequent battles in the play--one of which is very similar in its structure and context--call for on-stage armies to exit before the battles begin. And the parallel scene in Shakespeare's King John [II.1] calls for the exit of both armies before the battle. The Troublesome Reign text, which includes authorial directives for action but which shows no evidence of playhouse origin, may have a lapse at this point --such was the feeling of the Variorum King John editors who added an exeunt [486]--but there is no real evidence either way. Cairncross suggested that the play borrowed heavily from Battle of Alcazar, II and III Henry VI, and Richard III,<sup>17</sup> the second and third of which have several on-stage group clashes, and all of which have extensive fighting activity on the stage. The general attribution of the play to Peele is of little help--his corpus is too unsure for any patterns to be dependable.

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<sup>17</sup>See Play List.



In Famous Victories an army exits to fight, there are off-stage battle-cries from the enemy, and then "The Battell" [F<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]. The army re-enters, and the fighting is over. The battle appears to have been an important part of the play: the S. R. entry (May 14, 1594) reads "The Famous Victories of Henrye the Fyft, conteyninge the honorable battell of Agincourt," and the title page of the quarto (1598) repeats the S. R. entry phrasing.<sup>18</sup> Kirschbaum called the play a bad quarto, and suggested that it was the product of an actors' memorial reconstruction.<sup>19</sup> Such circumstances lead us to assume that the stage direction reflects a set-piece of on-stage business known to the actors.<sup>20</sup> As is generally the pattern, it apparently ended with the armies making their way off the stage.

The same stage direction appears in David and Bethsabe. After Absalon's army leaves the stage to do battle, there is "The battell, and Absalon hangs by the haire" [1536]. No stage directions call for entrances, but the captured Absalon and the victorious army are on the stage after this point. Although the context is the same as in Famous Victories, and

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<sup>18</sup>Quoted in Greg, Bibliography.

<sup>19</sup>"Census of Bad Quartos," 33.

<sup>20</sup>See above, p. 190.

the plays date from close to or before 1590, there is less evidence to go on. Chambers thought the play a "boil-down" of an earlier play,<sup>21</sup> but did not suggest who did the boiling. The text includes at least one stage direction in the past tense--"he threw at him" [1367]--which is slight enough evidence for a theory of memorial reconstruction. Absalon hangs for well over a hundred lines--an actor could not hang for so long unless comfortable, and it would probably take a few moments so to hang him. If he were hanged out of sight, and then "discovered" as the climax to an off-stage battle, the stage would be empty for the time it took to hang him. If, however, "the battell" was a set-piece of on-stage business, there could be time for the hanging; and if there was enough scurry, there may have been enough distraction to enable him to be hanged on the open stage. There is a full-scale group clash earlier in the play [222], and an excursion that probably included a group clash later on [851-2]. It seems likely that the stage direction is similar to the one in Famous Victories, and is for on-stage group fighting.

The text of Edward I, generally accepted as corrupt,

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<sup>21</sup>E. S., III, 461. Cf. also Henslowe's entry: "pd for poleyys & worckmanshipp for to hange absolome," Foakes and Rickert, 217.

incomplete, and far from Peele's intent, nevertheless includes stage directions that are obviously authorial.<sup>22</sup> One sequence, in the middle of the play, is particularly vague. The King is seen leaving for a meeting and probable battle with the distant Balliol. After his exit--not a "military" one at all--Balliol enters with his train. The dialogue, although it establishes that Balliol is no friend of the King, makes no mention of any preparation for battle, nor does it give any hint that a battle is forthcoming. Then, without an exit or transition of any kind, a stage direction appears:

After the fight of Iohn Balioll is done, enter Mortimor pursuing of the Rebels. [2299-2300]

Then, again with no transition, there are instructions for a proclamation to be read, the words of which are not given. It has not been suggested, to my knowledge, that these lines in any way suggest memorial reconstruction. If such is not the case, it seems obvious that this was written with at least a very good idea of what would be done on the stage, and that the actors would have been parcel to the knowledge. This raises a complex problem of stage direction transmission that cannot be gone into here,<sup>23</sup> but it seems as though the stage

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<sup>22</sup>See Play List: esp. D. J. Ashe.

<sup>23</sup>I have elsewhere in this thesis suggested that authors may have orally transmitted certain pieces of business [p. 394]; and cf. David Klein, "Did Shakespeare Produce His Own Plays?," MLR, LVII (1962), 556-60.

direction as it stands--specifying as it does a particular piece of business--reflects an activity intended to occur on the stage.

A stage direction in II Iron Age brings armies into opposition on the stage, but is muddled as to what they do. Two men enter and threaten each other while a battle rages off-stage. The text reads:

Alarum. They are both wounded, and diuided  
by the two armies, who confusedly come  
betwixt them . . . [361]

After this the armies seem to be off-stage again, for the stage direction goes on to call for the meeting of some comrades who are out of the fray. This sequence appears to be some form of excursion which, in the context of the scene itself, and of the especially spectacular play in which it appears, and considering that Heywood was especially prone to on-stage group contention, seems to cry out for some kind of fighting between the two armies.

I Henry VI includes a scene in which two large forces seem to be contending on the stage. The text reads:

Alarum: Excursions, wherein Talbots Sonne  
is hemm'd about, and Talbot  
rescues him.

Talb. Saint George, and Victory; fight Souldiers, fight:  
The Regent hath with Talbot broke his word,  
And left vs to the rage of France his Sword.  
Where is Iohn Talbot? pawse, and take thy breath,  
I gaue thee Life, and rescu'd thee from Death. [IV.vi.1-5]

From this point on the father and son converse, with the stage otherwise apparently empty. Talbot's words to his soldiers, his seeking for his son as though not immediately discernable, and the phrase "hemm'd about" all suggest fighting that involves two fairly large groups.

In Marlowe's Edward II, an army marches off the stage to do battle, after which the text reads:

Alarums, excursions, a great fight, and a retreat.  
[1577]

The troupe that enters immediately after identifies the "retreat" as a sound. The alarums were undoubtedly sounds as well, and the excursions some form of cross-stage action. The great fight may or may not have been intended as an on-stage activity. The stage directions seem authorial throughout the play, and there is little other evidence for on-stage battles in plays by Marlowe, so it is likely that only the sound of a great fight was heard while the excursions were seen.

A few other plays include places that are too ambiguous for even an educated guess. Another Marlowe play, Massacre at Paris, includes a stage direction, intended to represent a battle, that reads (with the stage empty) "Alarums within. The Duke Ioyeux alaine" [949]. We wonder here, if the action were entirely off-stage, how the slaying of the Duke would

have been conveyed to the audience. Dyce interpreted the direction as calling for an off-stage shout: "Alarums within and a cry 'The Duke Joyeux is slain.'"<sup>24</sup>

A similar question arises in Wounds of Civil War. Lodge calls for "A great skirmish in Rome and long, some slaine. At last enter [the victors]" [1933-4]. An early Admiral's Company play such as this could have quite well included on-stage group fighting, but Lodge wrote no other scenes that suggest such a practice, and the two other battles in the play are produced by off-stage sound effects alone. The question remains: what did he mean by "some slaine?" Off-stage cries of agony?

#### Problem Texts and a "Principle" Examined

Most of the problem texts in the preceding section, and those to follow in the section on Assaults, are authorial in nature. The particularly ambiguous ones might cause us to consider a recently suggested principle of early play-writing. Southern examined the texts of Medieval and later interludes and moralities, and finding much ambiguity--especially about the existence of certain properties and

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<sup>24</sup>See Brooke, Works of Marlowe, 468. The problem here is almost identical to the Matthew Goffe one in II Henry VI [IV.vii].

stage activities--came to the conclusion that the ambiguity was intentional on the part of the author.<sup>25</sup> He felt that traveling groups would have had to contend with many varying circumstances and playing conditions, and would have preferred stage directions that were less than rigid and that permitted adjustments from town to town. That such a theory might apply to Elizabethan plays, and be especially pronounced in texts prepared for production on the road (a preparation often predicated as the raison d'etre for memorial reconstructions), is easily seen. It seems a far step, however, knowing the many avenues of corruption that were possible in the transmission of texts--even of those that exist in manuscript--to establish a principle of playwriting on the grounds of textual ambiguity. Much current theory about the structure of theatres is based on the assumption that plays were written with certain theatres in mind. Many of the plays so written were taken on the road, but it is difficult to imagine some of the complex effects called for in Heywood's Ages plays, for instance, on any but a 'prepared' stage. We have noted above that many standard weapons and costumes are not mentioned in stage directions unless they are involved in unusual activity. It seems

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<sup>25</sup>Seven Ages of the Theatre, 138-9.

quite possible then, that even if incomplete stage directions are sometimes the product of intentional omission, they are based on an assumption that some form of known or conventional procedure would be followed. The great variety of development in battle scenes makes an assumption of standard conventionality hardly warranted, and we have only slight knowledge of the extra-textual means by which actors knew of playwrights' desires, but either seems somehow safer to assume than a principle of playwriting based on ambiguity.

### Assaults

A great many assault scenes are closely related to the discussion of on-stage group fighting, and can most profitably be examined here. For the sake of coherence it will be easier to discuss all the conventions of assault scenes in this section, even though not all of them include group fighting.

A few assaults on cities are, in fact, identical in their stage appearance to many ordinary field battles. In the attack on the city of Corioli in Coriolanus, for instance, an army marches on to the stage through one of the stage openings, is met by an army that marches on to the stage through another stage opening, they fight, and eventually



exit through one of the stage openings to continue the battle out of sight. It is only the context established by the dialogue that makes the tiring-house a city wall instead of a hill or some other barrier to sight. Similarly, in scenes in which assaulting forces exit as though to "a breach on the other side," or to an off-stage entrance to the town, the physical appearance would be that of an army that charges off through a stage opening, after which would be heard the sounds of off-stage battle. Even in scenes in which armies are represented as entering on-stage gates there would be an army that charged off stage through a stage opening, followed by the sounds of off-stage fray, or in some cases, to be met by a force in the doorway.

Only, in fact, when walls are scaled in sight of the audience would the fact of an assault be established in a manner other than through the context of the play and its dialogue, and would the actors be required to perform in an unusual manner. Such sequences are found in only, at the most, eight plays, and in no more than ten battles. We shall return to this shortly.

One fairly standard convention in assault scenes involved special use of the stage. Most are preceded by a parley between the attacking forces and representatives of the city. The usual practice is for an army to march on to

the stage and to establish that it is at the walls of a city with dialogue, and probably (although there is no direct evidence) in the way it aligns itself and in the way the leaders point their gestures.<sup>26</sup> Very rarely does this vary: a Chorus sets the scene in Henry V [III. Prol.], and in three plays representatives of the city enter first. Even in one of the latter, the scene merely begins a new development in what has been a long siege.<sup>27</sup>

Foreshortening, common in scenes in the field, is rare in assault scenes. Only in Edmond Ironside does it clearly occur: an army enters and sends a herald forth to "yon citie" to signal for a parley. He speaks to a leader "above," and returns with the town's refusal to give in [864-905].

City representatives usually appear on the "walls." How many are intended to enter is usually obscure, because most stage directions end with "others" or "soldiers." In Orlando Furioso, only one city representative is called for either in stage direction or dialogue [420], and the greatest specified number is in Humour Out Of Breath, which calls for the entrance of six characters and "Lords" [H<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]. The latter

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<sup>26</sup>Horestes, C<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>; David and Bethsabe, 164-88; II Tamburlaine, 103; I Henry VI, I.iii; Coriolanus, I.iv; Brazen Age, 223; etc.

<sup>27</sup>I Henry VI, II.i. The others are II Tamburlaine, 124, and Wounds of Civil War, 2072.

avoids fighting, however, and the largest number actually named in scenes that involve fighting is in Devil's Charter--four and "souldiers, Drummes, Trumpets" [61]--and in Brazen Age--four and "&c." [223]

Not all city representatives appear on the walls. In Horestes the keeper of the gate is instructed to "speake ouer  $\frac{1}{2}$  wal" [C<sub>4</sub><sup>V</sup>], and in I Henry VI a lieutenant "speakes within" [I.iii]. If we accept the stage directions in I Henry VI [II.1] and in Edward IV [14 & 20] as complete and assume that entrances were made through lower-stage doors unless "above" is specified in some way, these three scenes depict city fathers standing in or entering through lower-stage doors.

It is in scaling scenes that assaults are the most different and, in certain ways, the most spectacular. Such scenes appear as early as David and Bethsabe (ca. 1587-92) and II Tamburlaine (ca. 1590), and were still in use at the Red Bull in Heywood's Brazen Age (1611) and perhaps in Four Prentices--published as theirs in 1615. A wall scaling even appears in Humour Out of Breath, a play belonging to a children's company (the King's Revels) in 1608, but it ends with battle thwarted.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>The on-stage army calls for ladders--four leaders are specifically named--and begin to scale the walls, but "As they are scaling the walls, the Ladies come forth" [H<sub>1</sub><sup>V</sup>], and the ladies are discovered to be missing friends. The invaders get at least far enough up the ladders to read the inscriptions on the ladies' shields.

In several sequences the staging is organized so that only a few men scale the wall. In I Henry VI [II.i], three men enter with scaling ladders under the cover of darkness, and scale the wall at separate places. Although there is no suggestion that others accompany them, or that an invading army enters the city at any other point, a soldier (apparently on the side of the assaulters) appears with loot near the end of the sequence, giving the impression that the assault was carried out at other (off-stage) places. In Four Prentices, the defenders of a city remain on the walls while a battle rages off-stage. They have promised to defend their standards, and to reward any member of the enemy able to steal and replace them with others:

Enter at two seuerall dores, Guy and Eustace climbe vp the wals, beate the Pagans, take away the Crownes on their heads, and in the stead hang vp the contrary Shields, and bring away the Ensignes, flourishing them, seuerall wayes. [234]

Here the ensuing dialogue clearly establishes that the attack occurred off-stage as well as on.

Five plays include wall scalings by armies or large contingents. In Selimus an assault is made with the stage direction "Alarum. Scale the walles" [1200], and another with "Allarum, beats them off the walles" [2391]; in II Tamburlaine, "Alarme, and they scale the walles" [125]; and in Brazen Age, "Alarme Telamon first mounts the walles, the

rest after" [224]. In David and Bethsabe the stage directions are less specific: just before an assault early in the play, the leader of an on-stage army--Joab--says "assault, and scale this kingly tower" [188], but the stage direction reads merely "Assault, and they win the Tower, and Ioab speakes aboue" [222]. This may have been staged with a lower-stage assault on the town, culminating in an entrance on the upper stage. In a later assault sequence there is "Alarum, excursions, assault, Exeunt omnes" [851], but the only evidence for a scaling is in the lines of the victor who enters immediately afterward and says:

Now clattering armes, and wrathfull storms of war,  
 Haue thundred ouer Rabbaes raced towers.  
[853-4, italics mine]<sup>29</sup>

The assault in Horestes is ambiguous, but may have included a scaling. When Horestes' army marches on, he says:

The walles be hye yet I intend, vppon them first to go,  
 And as I hope you sodierrs will, your captayne eke follow  
 Yf I for sake to go before then fley you eke be hynde.  
[C<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>]

The city representative does not appear on the walls, however, but is instructed to speak over the wall. The stage direction dealing with the assault itself reads:

Go & make your liuely battel & let it be  
 longe eare you can win y Citie and when

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<sup>29</sup>The very literary stage directions in Devil's Charter call for Caesar, and apparently others, to "entreth by scalado" [66].

you haue won it let Horestes bringe out his  
mother . . . [D<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]

The "go" at the opening of the direction, and the "bring out" at the end do not suggest the use of walls. Later in the scene, the caputred villain is hanged by being pushed off "lader" [D<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]. The ladder and Horestes' opening lines suggest scaling but the rest of the stage directions suggest an entrance through a stage door.<sup>30</sup>

Scaling ladders are called for in I Henry VI and in Humour Out Of Breath, and are used. They appear in Henry V -- "Scaling Ladders at Harflew" [III.i] and are not used.

There is no evidence that there was any means for scaling the tiring house wall except by ladder, but the phrases "climbe vp the wals," in Four Prentices and "mounts the walles," in Brazen Age might reflect some kind of non-ladder scaling--or they may merely show Heywood's mind at work. The

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<sup>30</sup>I have never seen it suggested, but there lurks the possibility that this text includes editorially prepared stage directions. The title page informs us that the play has been divided for six to act: a study of the text shows that more than six are really needed (see Bevington, Mankind to Marlowe, 72 & 103). Can it be that the hand that divided the play--not necessarily the author or anyone connected with Rich's men, but perhaps an editor connected with William Griffith's print shop--was the author of the very directive stage directions, and that the ambiguity reflects an assault with ladders in the original that was edited out in the print shop so that the play could be presented in a simple manner?

other scaling scenes do not mention ladders, nor are there any ladders in the Henslowe "inventories." If such scenes were more common we might assume the same principle at work as with many other properties--in most cases it was not thought necessary to mention common props unless they were to be handled in an unorthodox manner.<sup>31</sup> We might wonder why such a seemingly spectacular piece of stage business was, if at all successful, so rarely used, and if unsuccessful, why it was still being used twenty years after its first extant appearance.

One unusual and effective attack on a city is found in Devil's Charter. Although there may be some question of the authority of the text, the scene as it exists is especially suited to the Elizabethan theatre as we know it, and seems most likely to have been conceived theatrically. A lower-stage army argues with a group on the walls, and then threatens to bombard the castle with its ordnance. The castle group exits "off the walls," ordnance goes off, there is a trumpet signal from within the castle, and then the castle forces appear on the walls again and make peace [29-30]. The assaulting army stays on-stage throughout the scene.

The majority of the two dozen-odd assaults were played

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<sup>31</sup>Cf. Henry V, below, p. 338.

on the lower stage level. Although the plot-contexts of such scenes varied, the staging takes only two basic forms. One is found in Orlando Furioso. An on-stage army argues with a city representative on the wall, and there is an "exeunt omnes" after which the sounds of off-stage battle are heard [439-41]. Such a staging becomes, for all practical purposes, another ordinary off-stage battle.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, after the scene has been set by Chorus in Henry V, the English army enters as though momentarily beaten back from an off-stage point, and when they exit it is to return to the breach. In fact, although the Chorus speaks of a siege in progress, there is nothing in the dialogue to identify the tiring house wall with a city wall at this point--and the dialogue at the end of the scene leads us to assume that the ensuing parley scene [III.iii] will occur at a different place. At any rate, this is an off-stage battle identical in appearance to most battles, except that scaling ladders are carried to show that an assault is in progress.

If we were to compare the scene in Henry V with a scene in Wounds of Civil War and had no idea of their dates, we might assume that Henry V was the earlier play. They use

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<sup>32</sup>Similar development occurs in II Tamburlaine, 104; and in Lovesick King, 40.



the stage in much the same way in very similar contexts, but Lodge chose to attempt a more subtle--and realistic--staging. The scene begins with the sounds of battle, followed by the entrance of Marius (the defender of the city) and some soldiers upon the wall. Marius establishes that there is an assault on the walls in progress at an off-stage point. They leave to see the fighting at the breach. Then the assaulting army enters, as though in momentary retirement from the breach. Unlike Henry V, the tiring house is here identified with the walls, for Marius appears and talks with the lower stage group. He and two followers commit suicide, several citizens beg the invaders to spare the women and children, and the invaders exit to charge the breach again. They shortly re-enter victorious. [2072-2119]

Although the dialogue and context clearly suggest that Lodge saw the exit door as an un-localized exit, and not as a city gate, the mere presence of actors on the upper stage, and the identification of the tiring house wall as the wall of the city, would make the lower-stage exit somewhat ambiguous. The absence of fighting at the gate is the only thing that would prevent the audience from visualizing this as an assault on the gates themselves. This may seem to labor a point, but it is apparent that, in the minds of authors at least, there often was a desire to assume an un-localised

exit even when the "walls" were present.<sup>33</sup>

The second form taken by lower-stage assaults occurs when the author localizes the exit door, and represents it in dialogue and context as "gates." The borderline is not always clear, of course, for the exit may include a certain ambiguity, as in Wounds of Civil War, or the invaders may be depicted as entering city gates but receiving no opposition. It seems easy to envision such scenes in the different forms they might take. The assaulting army can enter the gates and act as though meeting opposition from an army generally invisible to the audience. Then, if successful, the invaders enter the town, and the battle continues off-stage. If not successful, the army comes back on to the stage, showing signs of retreat and/or defeat. I list such development as "possible" because several problem texts can easily be interpreted in this way. The conclusion of the assault in Coriolanus is the only one, however, that clearly calls for invaders to leave the stage through city gates.

#### Assaults--Some Problem Texts

With the different possibilities in mind, it becomes easier to discuss the several ambiguous texts.

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<sup>33</sup>See below, p. 362.

In Soliman and Perseda an of-stage army agrues with the prince of Cyprus, who is on the walls. Then the army leader, Brusus, speaks, and there is:

Come fellow Souldiers, let vs to the breach  
Thats made already on the other side.

Exeunt to the battel.

Phylippo and Cipris are both slaine

Enter Brusor, with Souldiers . . with . . . prisoners.

Bru. Now Rhodes is yoakt, . . .

There lyes the Gouvernor, and there his sonne. [F<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]

Brusus' exit lines suggest an authorial attempt to exclude on-stage fighting, and suggest that the intended picture was of an exit to a point still outside the city and not through the city gates. But what about Phylippo and Cyprus? Their bodies are not (if we accept the stage direction as complete) carried on, and yet they are on the stage at the end of the assault. How, if the battle was out of sight, would the audience know that they were slain? If they were not carried on by the entering victors--an act that would make the stage direction about their slaying merely a literary interjection--it is possible that in spite of Brusus' exit speech the assaulting army met with opposition at the stage door, and the two men were slain in the melee and found their way on to the stage.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Cf. the apparently off-stage "The Duke Ioyeux slaine" in Massacre at Paris, 468.

Later in the play there is another assault scene with equally puzzling, but different circumstances. An army is at the walls of Rhodes, three people are dead on the stage, and the leader of the army discovers he has been poisoned. The text then reads:

Let me see Rhodes recovered ere I die,  
Souldiers, assault the town on euery side,  
Spoile all, kill all, let none escape your furie,  
Sound an alarum to the fight.  
Say captaine, is Rhodes recovered againe.  
Capt. It is my Lord, and stoopes to Soliman. [H<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>]

It is apparent that a battle was intended to be depicted in some way, and that the stage was empty, except for the poisoned leader, at least part of the time preceding the re-entry of the Captain. Without any dialogue to suggest that the army exited to an off-stage breach, and with a great deal of previous exposition that established that the scene was taking place at the walls of the city, it seems almost automatic to envision the army as entering the city of Rhodes through "gates" represented by a stage door.

In II Tamburlaine, written about the same time, a sequence is clouded by probably missing stage directions. One of Tamburlaine's armies enters as though before the walls of a town. A leader tells the drummer to "summon a parle," and there is the stage direction "Summon the battell."<sup>35</sup> Captaine with his

35 This seems to be a slip or elision intended to mean "Summon for the parley before battle," or "Summon a signal to the town that battle is imminent."

wife and sonne" [103]. After some argument the captain apparently leaves the stage, although no exit is given. The army prepares for battle, but there is little talk of entry into the city: there is instead much talk about preparations to bombard the city from without and to so defeat it. There is no exit for the army, but apparently they leave, for they are not on after the next stage direction which calls for the entrance of the Captain and his wife and son, fleeing from an already conquered city. If we accept the dialogue and add the two obvious exits, there is no evidence that the invaders are to be imagined as entering the city at all: they exit from the stage to a point outside the city and (it would be assumed) defeat it by cannon alone. (Such a sequence would be similar to the cannonading scene in Devil's Charter.)

Early in Edward I is a scene that, if taken exactly as written, suggests an on-stage assault, but leaves us with more problems than we wish. The sequence begins with a group of Welsh citizens preparing to parley at the walls of their city with the invading Longshanks. They exit, and Longshanks and his army enter. Longshanks addresses his men and the text reads:

Assault, assault, and charge them all amaine,  
 They feare, they flie, they faint, they fight in vaine  
 But where is gentle Dauid in his Den?

Loth were Io, ught [sic] but good should him betide,  
Sound an Alarum.

On the walles enter Longshankes, Sussex, [etc.].  
 [893-900]

Longshank's first words seem like a direct call for action, and then suggest that the battle is under way. The Alarum after his speech is the first sound called for, however. The fact that the victors are called for to enter on the walls may mean that they are not intended to scale them, and it seems as likely that there is a missing exeunt (with fighting in the doorway) after the speech as that there was an on-stage scaling.

Later in the play is the most crowded stage direction in this study:

Alarum a charge after long skirmishe assault florishe.  
 [2459]

If all of this was intended to be sound only, the alertness of the audience and the subtlety of the stage-hands would have been taxed to the utmost. It is especially difficult to imagine how the sounds of an assault could have been differentiated from the sounds of the preceding long skirmish. If, however, these are authorial instructions to the actors, with an assumption that they would be carried out in a more or less standard fashion, it is probable that the assault, at least, was intended to be on-stage. The poor state of the text makes speculation difficult, and Peele's corpus

is too tentative and in textually difficult texts for any personal patterns to be apparent.

In Lovesick King, probably written by an actor familiar with professional conditions, there is ambiguity about the localization of the exit door, and a concomitant ambiguity about the action. The King of Scots and his army on the lower stage parley with the city defenders on the upper stage. A city captain says "set ope the gates And like a torrent on their heads wee'll fall," after which there is an "Exeunt. / Alarm, Excursions." and the King enters to say that the city is taken [1516-21]. Here, as in other plays, it would be easy for the audience to assume that the stage door was a gate to the city and that the exiting army was entering the city. The city-defender's promise to fall on the heads of the attackers leads us to expect opposition at the gates, if not an actual entrance on to the stage of the city army, but the stage directions, accepted exactly as they stand, do not warrant such a staging.

The suggestion that Lovesick King is indebted to Edmond Ironside<sup>36</sup> may be of some help here. The major assault scene in the latter play begins with one army before the walls of a city. A city father instructs his soldiers to "gard the

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<sup>36</sup>Bentley, J. C. S., II, 388.

gatte[s]" [902] and departs. The lower stage army prepares to assault the city, and a stage direction reads "assayle the walls" [914]. The attack is unsuccessful, however, for the army is still on the stage afterward. Although there is no further hint in the text that "assayle the walls" called for a meeting of the assaulting army and guards at the gates, it is difficult to interpret the latter direction as calling for a mere one-sided activity. One further piece of evidence hints in the direction of fighting at the gates. Just before the "assayle" stage direction there is a speech by the lower-stage leader. He says:

assault, the Cytie batter downe the walls  
 [skale all the Turretes, rush the gattes assunder]  
 whie slack yee souldiers whoe is formost man  
 to give a valiant onsett on the Towne. [911-14]

The bracketed line was cut by the seventeenth century stage adapter, perhaps to eliminate dialogue reference to action not wanted in the production. We might infer from this that the original sixteenth century production--if there was one--would have included a scaling (or attempted scaling) on the basis of this speech. If so, we might further infer that other lines in the dialogue--those referring to the placing of guards at the gates--would have motivated the actors, and that the assault included (in both productions) a fight at the gates in which the invaders were beaten back



onto the stage after an unsuccessful attempt to enter the city.<sup>37</sup>

Such a repulse seems to occur in several other plays, although the evidence is far from conclusive. In Edward IV, at the close of a difficult sequence to which I will return shortly, the on-stage forces of Falconbridge, Spicing, and the Rebels threaten the Mayor of London, who concludes his rebuttal with:

Set open the gates! Nay, then, we'll sally out . . .  
Then cry King Edward, and let's issue out. [20]

The rebels prepare to charge the gates and there is:

Exeunt.  
The Lord Maior and the Citizens hauing valiantly  
repulsed the Rebels from the city, enters  
Falconbridge and Spicing, and their train,  
wounded and dismayed. [21]

Although Heywood does not specifically call for fighting at the gates, the effect would be that fighting took place at least just beyond the stage door. Here again, with the tiring-house wall established as the walls of the city, it would be difficult for an audience not to see the stage door as the entrance to the city.

Another Heywood play, Four Prentices, uses the same terms for a similar scene. The on-stage Christians threaten

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<sup>37</sup>Cf. below, p. 352.

the Pagans on the walls; the text reads:

Exeunt. Alarum.  
The Christians are repulst. Enter at two seuerall  
dores [two Christians who climb walls, fight at least  
two Pagans, win, and exit] seuerall wayes.  
Enter [Pagans] [234]

The entering Pagans speak of their defeat. The Christians eventually win the battle, so it is likely that their repulse is only intended to be momentary, and in using the word "repulst" Heywood was not being "literary," but signifying that he wanted fighting at the stage door.

If, at any time during the preliminaries to an assault, the tiring house wall is identified as the walls of a city, it becomes natural for the audience to envision the stage door as the entrance to the city. When, therefore, an army leaves the stage in order to fight with the city forces, we might expect fighting at the doorway. Few texts call for such activity, however, and we can only wonder if texts lack such instructions because an assault of this kind was thought automatically to include fighting, or because the conventions of such scenes allowed the audience to accept the stage door as an un-localized "non-door" that led to a distant and off-stage city gate. The latter seems unlikely for an audience to accept.

The dumb-show in John of Bordeaux, if presented in the manner described by one of the on-lookers, is identical to

the assault in Coriolanus. The Turks march on as though at the walls of a city, the city army charges out to do battle outside the walls and is at first successful, but is eventually beaten back into the city [449-67]. In Coriolanus, the change in the tide of battle occurs because of the bravery of one man, whereas in John of Bordeaux it changes because the Turks are joined by a reserve force.

Two texts involve extended or very problematic sequences, and require lengthy discussion.

In Heywood's I Edward IV, presented by Derby's men about 1599, a long scene at the walls of London ends with the repulse of the would-be invaders. The authorial stage directions are often unclear about where actors are supposed to be, and there are lapses that require filling in. The sequence begins with a scene within London which depicts the Mayor, Shore, and others preparing for the approach of the rebels. A messenger arrives with word of the enemy's approach, and tells them to guard both Aldgate and Bishopgate. They all exit, and the rebels, headed by Falconbridge and Spicing, enter.

Fal. Summon the City, and command our entrance;  
Which, if we shall be stubbornly denied,  
Our power shall rush like thunder through the walls.  
Spi. Open your gates, slaues, when I command ye.

Spicing beats on the gates, and then enters the Lord  
Mayor and his associates, with prentices. [14]

Although Heywood is not explicit about where the Mayor and his group enter, several lines of dialogue suggest that they are within the city: Spicing threatens the mayor with "vnlocke, vnbolt! or I'll bolt you, if I get in" [15], and later the mayor says:

Come, we will pull vp our portcullises,  
And let me see thee enter if thou dare. [16]

It seems reasonable to assume that these lines would have been spoken from the upper stage: the argument between the two groups is lengthy, and such a crowded scene at such length would be unique in extant texts if it took place with the city group "within," on the lower stage.<sup>38</sup> The rest of the scene, although even more ambiguous, goes further to suggest that the walls were used.

After the Mayor's words there is (from the lower stage force):

1] Fal. Spoken like a man, and true veluet-iacket,  
2] And we will enter, or strike by the way. Exeunt.

3] Enter Lord Maior, Recorder, and Iosselin. [17]<sup>39</sup>

The entrants speak of having manned the walls, and the Mayor

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<sup>38</sup> In I Henry VI [I.iii]--to be discussed immediately below--an argument appears to take place in this way, but it involves only one or two city representatives, and is quite short.

<sup>39</sup> At least one more apprentice appears with the latter group--lines are given to a First and a Second Apprentice.

gives an oration, ending with:

Brothers, away; let vs defend our walles.

The first apprentice promises that the apprentices will fight and

the trial shall be seene  
Against these rebels on this champion greene.

Then, without an entrance cue, and without any previous recognition, Spicing and Falconbridge taunt the Londoners and refer to the Mayor's words and the brave words of the apprentices.

The most workable interpretation of this sequence is to assume that the Exeunt at line 3 applies only to the group on the walls, and that they immediately re-enter on the lower stage, as though coming from within the city to confront the rebels.<sup>40</sup>

After further argument, a second apprentice tells the mayor:

My Lord, return you back; let vs alone;  
You are our masters; giue vs leaue to work;  
And if we do not vanquish them in fight,  
Let vs go supperless to bed at night.

Exeunt all but Spicing, Smoke, and their crew.<sup>41</sup>  
[18-19]

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<sup>40</sup>Later in the play there is a field battle preceded by an extensive alignment on the stage of opposing forces; it seems likely that the same sort of alignment is intended here.

<sup>41</sup>The apparent absence of Falconbridge (who has no lines in the ensuing scene) leads to further ambiguity later.

The rebels prepare to assault the city, and then one of the apprentices who had been on the lower stage shortly before, enters "on the walls" [19]. (This is the only time that walls appears in a stage direction in either part of the play.) After a short argument there is:

Here is a very fierie assault on all sides, wherein the prentices do great service.

Enter Falconbridge, angry, with his men. [20]

If we assume that the Rebel force included Falconbridge even though he was not listed in the exception to the Exeunt, there are two possibilities here, both with some precedent in other plays. Either the Rebels assault and enter the two stage doors--(representing Aldgate and Bishopsgate as spoken of at the beginning of the sequence?)--and are beaten back by the apprentices: the entrance of Falconbridge and his men would then be a re-entry on to the stage as though they were being beaten back by the in-city forces;<sup>42</sup> or, because the "great service" of the prentices is singled out in the stage direction, the assault may culminate in the entrance of the Apprentices through one door, and the rout of the rebels through another--unlocalized--door, the re-entry of the apprentices into the city door, and then the re-entrance on to the

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<sup>42</sup> Exactly this occurs in a stage direction a few lines later.

stage of the rebels. One other possibility exists. If Falconbridge left the stage when the city forces left--perhaps with a few men as though preparing to attack the city at another point--then the entrance of the angry Falconbridge may be after the "fierie assault" and the effect intended to be that while Spicing and his crew were being beaten back on the stage, Falconbridge's group was being beaten back at another off-stage point. In this way there would be "a very fierie assault on all sides."<sup>43</sup> There is quite possibly a purely theatrical purpose here: if Falconbridge were to leave the stage with a small force, his men could momentarily double as the defending apprentices in the on-stage assault.

The scene continues as Falconbridge berates his men and Spicing calls again for a fresh assault. Then

Enter Lord Maior and his train.

Maior. Set open the gates! Nay then, we'll sally out . . .  
Then cry King Edward, and let's issue out.

Fal. Now . . .  
The gates set open and the portcullis vp,  
Let's pell-mell in, to stop their passage out . . .

Exeunt.  
The Lord Maior and the Citizens hauing valiantly repulsed the Rebels from the city, enters Falconbridge and Spicing, and their train, wounded and dismayed. [20-21]

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<sup>43</sup>One of the probable sources, Holinshed [Ellis, III, 323], gives the impression that the assault referred to here was made by a contingent led by Spicing.

There is little likelihood that the mayor's lines call for him to be anywhere but on the lower stage, ready to meet the rebels. The gates open, the Rebels charge into the stage door representing the city gates, and are beaten back.

The repeated dialogue references to portcullises [15, 16, 20] lead to speculation. Perhaps Heywood envisioned the scene performed with some kind of moveable portcullis inside the stage "door-gates."<sup>44</sup> No other play in this study hints at them, and there is little evidence for them in any Elizabethan plays that I know of. Heywood may have written this sequence with the very real gates of London in his mind, and envisioned the scene in a real life setting rather than on the stage; the stage directions are, however, decidedly theatrical in orientation.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>One of the probable sources, Stow's Annales [Yy<sup>v</sup>], states that the "parcolise" at Aldgate was dropped during the assault. If Holinshed and Stow were the only sources for this sequence--see O. Cromwell, Thomas Heywood, 155--Heywood invented almost all of the details of conversation and action, greatly revised the order of events, and changed the names of many characters.

<sup>45</sup>Cf. later in the play: Shore's army comes from the field to intercept a group about to attack a city: the stage direction, however, reads "Shore and his Soldiers issue forth and repulse him" [31]. Such a direction can only derive from a mind thinking of performance in a theatre. Cf. also p. 19, where two speeches break off and end with "and so forth."



Many scenes in I Henry VI involve assaults and assault-like sequences, and most are not altogether clear.

The second scene in the play opens with a battle that might easily confuse an audience. The French army enters as though in the proximity of the besieged Orleans. There has been no preparation for this sequence, and the dialogue, although it establishes that the French have come to raise the siege, is not at all clear, and can easily give the impression--especially in lines 37-44--that the English are within the town. (It does not really become clear that they are not until I.iv.) The fighting, as called for in the stage direction and dialogue, looks very much like an assault: the French prepare to rush the English, and

Exeunt.

Here Alarum, they are beaten back by the  
English, with great losse.

Enter Charles, Alanson, and Reigneir.

Charles. Who euer saw the like? what men haue I?  
Dogges, Cowards, Dastards: I would ne're haue fled,  
But that they left me 'midst my Enemies.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Cairncross and others feel many of the stage directions in this play to be repetitious (see Play List), and the above is probably an example. The "Enter Charles . . ." is likely a repeat of "they are beaten back . . ." What Shakespeare probably had in mind was for the French to charge out a stage door, meet off-stage opposition, and re-enter with a much smaller force.

It may quite be that Shakespeare himself was ambiguous in his attitude as he wrote. According to Hall, the English forces besieging the town occupied two bastilles.<sup>47</sup> For much of the battle (and by scene iv Shakespeare depicts the circumstances) the English occupied a part of the outer fortifications of the town, and finally issued forth from it to fight the French in the decisive battle of the siege. With Hall's bastille and the outer fortifications in mind, Shakespeare probably saw this scene as a kind of assault, even though his text falls short of making it clear.

Scene I.iii includes an assault-like skirmish at the walls of the Tower of London. Although it does not involve armies, it is similar to most assaults, and is worth noting. Gloster and his serving men enter and prepare to break into the gates of the Tower.

Glosters men rush at the Tower Gates, and Woodville  
the Lieutenant speakes within.

(Unlike the similar scene in Edward IV there is no suggestion that the lieutenant can be seen: Gloster says, "is it you whose voyce I heare?") Then

Enter to the Protector at the Tower Gates, Winchester  
and his men in Tawney Coates.

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<sup>47</sup>The military meaning of the word is a large portable barricade used in sieges (OED).

Whether or not Winchester enters through the door localized as the gates is not suggested. It would be difficult, in this context, for a group to enter through any stage entrance and not give the impression that they were entering through a city gate, but one door was to be imagined as an un-localized, non-Tower door, for the entrance of Gloster's group was not from the Tower, and its later exit would be away from it. When the two groups come to blows, the text reads:

Here Glosters men beat out the Cardinalls men,  
and enter in the hurly-burly the Maior  
of London, and his Officers.

If Winchester's group had entered as though from the Tower, then this stage direction would call for his group to be momentarily beaten back into the Tower by the would-be invaders. The Mayor of London would logically enter through the un-localized door as though coming from another part of the city. This scene would closely resemble the assault in Coriolanus, in which the city forces come out of the gates to meet the invaders, and are eventually beaten back into the city.

I have already discussed I.v in the section on skirmishes, (p. 181), but a few comments in relation to assaults can be added. The context calls for Pucelle and her force to come from a point outside the town, to fight their way past Talbot

and his besieging army, and to enter the city. The text for the entire act reads as follows:

1 Here an Alarum againe, and Talbot pursueth the  
Dolphin, and driueth him: Then enter Ioane de  
Puzel, driuing Englishmen before her.  
Then enter Talbot.

5 Talb. Where is my strength, my valour, and my force?  
 Our English Troupes retyre, I cannot stay them,  
 A Woman clad in Armour chaseth them.

Enter Puzel.  
 Here, here shee comes. Ile haue a bowt with thee:  
 10 Deuill, or Deuils Dam, Ile coniure thee:  
 Blood will I draw on thee, thou art a Witch,  
 And straightway giue thy Soule to him thou seru'st.

Puzel. Come, come, 'tis onely I that must disgrace  
 thee. Here they fight.

15 Talb. Heauens, can you suffer Hell so to preuayle?  
 My brest Ile burst with straining of my courage,  
 And from my shoulders crack my Armes asunder,  
 But I will chastise this high-minded Strumpet.

They fight againe.  
 20 Puzel. Talbot farwell, thy houre is not yet come,  
 I must goe Victuall Orleance forthwith:  
A short Alarum: then enter the Towne  
with Souldiers.

O're-take me if thou canst, I scorne thy strength,  
 25 Goe, goe, cheare vp thy hungry-starued men,  
 Helpe Salisbury to make his Testament,  
 This Day is ours, as many more shall be. Exit.

Talb. My thoughts are whirled like a Potters Wheele,  
 I know not where I am, nor what I doe:  
 30 A Witch by feare, not force, like Hannibal,  
 Drives back our troupes, and conquers as she lists:  
 So Bees with smoake, and Doves with noysome stench,  
 Are from their Hyues and Houses driuen away.  
 They call'd vs, for our fiercenesse, English Dogges,  
 35 Now like to Whelpes, we crying runne away.

A short Alarum.  
 Hearke Countreyemen, eyther renew the fight,  
 Or teare the Lyons out of Englands Coat;  
 Renounce your Soyle, giue Sheepe in Lyons stead:

40 Sheepe run not halfe so trecherous from the Wolfe,  
 Or Horse or Oxen from the Leopard,  
 As you flye from your oft-subdued slaues.

Alarum. Here another Skirmish.

It will not be, retyre into your Trenches:

45 You all consented vnto Salisburies death,  
 For none would strike a stroake in his reuenge.  
 Puzel is entred into Orleance,  
 In spight of vs; or ought that we could doe.  
 O would I were to dye with Salisbury,

50 The shame hereof, will make me hide my head.

Exit Talbot.

Alarum, Retreat, Flourish.

Enter on the Walls, Puzel, Dolphin, Reigneir,  
 Alanson, and Souldiers.

If, as the context requires, all the entrances and exits before Pucelle's entrance into the town come from points outside the town (through an un-localized door), and for another door to be reserved as the gates, the first eight lines are difficult to picture on the Swan-drawing stage. Talbot would have to chase the Dolphin in one door, circle the stage and chase him out of the same door again. Then Pucelle would enter, circle around the English and chase them off the stage; then Talbot would enter alone, speak a few lines, and Pucelle and her troops would re-enter--all through the same door. By then an audience would be quite muddled. A third door would greatly simplify matters, making all the chases into excursions in one unlocalized door and out of another, and reserving the third door for the entrance into the city and the final assault upon the town by Talbot's

men. With or without a third door, the assault itself, for which the stage directions are also vague, is identical to the one in I.iii: Talbot calls his men to assault the gate that Pucelle has just entered, they meet opposition at the gate and are beaten back--as Talbot cheers them on to no avail--and they leave the stage through (one of) the un-localized door(s), as though retiring from the fray.

Act III, scene ii has no real problems of staging, except for a question about fighting at the city gates. It includes two assaults on the same town, and is one of the most complicated assault scenes in extant plays. French forces assault a town occupied by the English. They exit into the city with an alarum, and after sounds of fighting within the city, Talbot enters in an excursion as though being beaten from the city. Shortly afterward another group of routed English are beaten on-stage in an excursion, and bring with them an invalid. The French, now in complete occupation of the city, appear on the walls to taunt the English, and exit. The English regroup for a fresh attack on the city, charge the gates, and exit into the city again. The in-city fighting renews, an English coward flees the city while the battle rages, and finally the French flee the city. The invalid, who has watched and waited outside the walls, dies and is carried back into the re-won city, and then the victorious English

come on again to make sure that all the French have fled the vicinity. None of the stage directions specifically call for fighting, and it is difficult to know if the many excursions that accompany each entrance and exit were intended to call for fighting in view of the audience. Although they could easily have been played with all the fighting activity out of sight, such an interpretation would cast a bad light on the English in the first assault: if they were to exit from the city without any signs of battle, the effect would be that of flight, not a hard fought defense; and the flight of the coward later in the sequence would not seem as dramatically telling. It is more patriotic to assume that the stage directions "Talbot in an Excursion," and "An Alarum: Excursions. Bedford brought in sicke in a Chayre," called for fighting in the city gates, and for the English to be seen in real struggle against the French. Then the peremptory flight of the coward Englishman, and the flight of the French--"Pucell, Alanson, and Charles flye"--would carry much more dramatic impact.

The last battle in I Henry VI, coming as it does at the end of a long series of assault-like scenes, might, with only the text of the play before us, be interpreted as a similar sequence. There is no call for an assault, and the context calls for a battle--mostly off-stage-- that seems at first

to be in the open [V.iii]. However, while the battle still rages, one of the English enters with a captive woman. He signals to the castle at whose walls they are, and the lady's father appears above. No further explanation is given, and we are easily left with the logical conclusion that the battle took place at the walls of the castle, and that some, at least, of the English forces must have invaded the castle and captured the lady. The source (Holinshed's Chronicles)<sup>48</sup> explains the matter: the lady was actually captured outside the city as she attempted flight.

#### Assault Scenes--A Tentative Hypothesis

I have repeatedly drawn attention to a problem of staging inherent in all assault scenes. Whenever the tiring house wall is localized as the walls of a city, it would be difficult for the audience to visualize entrances and exits through stage doors as other than entrances and exits from the city itself. And yet each scene begins with the entrance of a would-be invader that comes not from the city, but toward it. And many sequences include exits for groups that leave the stage as though going to a point other than into the city. How then, given the structure of the stage, were the stage

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<sup>48</sup>Quoted in Cairncross, I Henry VI, 166-7.



doors differentiated, with one (or more) localized as the city entrance and one (or more) un-localized. The simplest means would be for some form of gates to be placed in or before one stage door, and for those gates to represent the only entrance to the city. Such an approach would be a development of the domus tradition and would make the scene easily understood by an audience. There is, however, little evidence to show that such gates were in use by companies other than the ones for which Shakespeare wrote. Even assuming some method by which one door was identified as gates, the structure of the stage makes the use of such a door liable to confusion when city representatives appear "above." Especially if the tiring house facade was flat all the way across, the city representatives would have to be well away from the un-localized entrance for the door-relationships to remain easily explicable. It is most likely that, for the sake of clarity, a stage door at one side rather than in the center, was used as gates. If the city representatives made their appearance well to the "gates'" side of the upper stage, the illusion would be enhanced, and such a staging was probably (in theatres in which it was at all possible) the practice. If any Elizabethan theatre had tiring-house facades that were curved or at angles--similar to the Cockpit-In-Court

designed by Inigo Jones<sup>49</sup>--such a staging would have been easily and simply handled.

### Assault Scenes--Conclusions

In spite of the fact that sieges were exceedingly common in English history--the Chronicles suggest that most of England's fighting on the Continent was a progression of them--and that the structure of the Elizabethan theatre was almost ideally suited to such scenes--Bradbrook has noted that scenes at the walls of cities and castles were among the two most common scenes in the literature--assault scenes are surprisingly uncommon in extant plays. Such comparative rarity may suggest an inherent awkwardness. Shakespeare put four or five in his I Henry VI, but steered away from them for the rest of his career--except notably in Coriolanus. Even in the latter, however, he brought the city forces out of the city to fight. But a theory of awkwardness would not explain why practised playwrights like Heywood were still using assaults as late as 1613.

There seems to be enough evidence to show that scaling of the tiring house wall--a popular picture of stage assaults (perhaps because of the scaling ladders in Henry V)--was rare,

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<sup>49</sup>Illustrated in Nicoll, Development of the Theatre, 133.

and that even the storming of city "gates" with fighting in the doorway was not too common. The latter assumption is based, however, only on the lack of direct calls for such activity in stage directions. Any attempt to stage several assault sequences brings to light a strong necessity for a third stage door if the sequence of events is to be at all explicable to an audience.

#### Assaults: Related Scenes

A few battles focus at the gates of a town or castle, but do not involve forces inside the walls. Two related sequences in King John [II.i & III.i-iii] and Troublesome Reign [ $C_4^F$ - $E_2^F$ ] show the French and English on the lower stage, and the Angier-men on the walls, but the battle is fought in the (off-stage) field between the French and English while the townsmen await the outcome. There is a good possibility that the townsmen stayed on the walls during the battle--there is no entrance cue given for them after the battles in either play. In Edward IV an army about to assault a city is intercepted by an army that comes from the field [31]. Just before this sequence, however, there have been several assaults made on the same city, and the interception comes as the last minute rescue of a beleaguered town. Talbot's last battle, in I Henry VI, deals with a similar interception.

The English forces are at the walls of Bordeaux and are threatening the town, when the sounds of an approaching French force are heard. In this case, however, the English exit to meet the French, and when the battle is depicted several scenes later there is no feeling of proximity to the city.[IV.ii-vii]

Two field battles in the Battle of Alcazar appear to be similar to certain assault scenes. With the stage empty, we find:

Alarums within, let the chambers be discharged,  
then enter to the battell, and the Moores flie.  
Skirmish still, then enter [retreating Moor leaders].  
[1300-03]

Although the direction is vague, it is easy enough to interpret: the sounds of battle are heard off-stage, the Moors come on to the stage, cross, and "enter" the tiring house through another door,<sup>50</sup> as though going into battle. They are beaten back on to the stage and fly out their original entrance door. The sounds of battle cease, and the defeated Moor leaders enter from the fray. An almost identical sequence occurs later in the play: with the stage empty

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<sup>50</sup>This interpretation of "enter" seems particularly likely in light of a stage direction later in the play that calls for two men to come on-stage with "they runne out"--1384.

Alarmer. Enter to the battaile, and the christians flye.  
The Duke of A / uero slaine.  
Enter Sebastian and Stukeley. [1366-9]<sup>51</sup>

Both sequences would be played exactly the same as the assault scene in I Henry VI, I.ii.<sup>52</sup>

Theatre assaults bear little apparent relationship to the real thing. It was thought militarily advisable to avoid open approach to a city, in order to add surprise:<sup>53</sup> dramatists invariably include a scene of parley before assaults. It was thought good practice to hold at least half of an invading force well out of range of the city artillery, and for only half ever to attack a town:<sup>54</sup> there is never any suggestion of such practice in plays. Real life assaults were invariably preceded by great bombardment:<sup>55</sup> only in Devil's Charter and perhaps Tamburlaine [29-30] is a town fired upon. Almost all fortresses, castles, and many cities had ditches

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<sup>51</sup>If, as seems likely, the direction calls for the slain Duke to be carried across the stage in the retreat, the business is unique in extant stage directions.

<sup>52</sup>Both directions were thought by Greg to have been added to bridge cuts made in the original (Greg, Two Elizabethan Stage Abridgments, 119), and it may even be that they were originally assaults.

<sup>53</sup>Machiavelli, Art of War, 215.

<sup>54</sup>Roger Williams, Brief Discourse, D<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., D<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>.

before the walls to discourage easy assault--and there was great controversy about the comparative virtues of the wet and dry ditch:<sup>56</sup> no playwright mentions ditches. Stones were commonly used in defense:<sup>57</sup> playwrights do not mention them in such scenes. The lack of real life activity is understandable in light of the structure of the stage, but that these things are not even mentioned in dialogue suggests that stage assaults were more a tradition inbred in the theatre and its structure than an attempt to reflect reality.

### Shipboard Battles

Although the focus of this chapter is on on-stage fighting, I shall treat the rather brief question of shipboard battles--on and off-stage--all together. In light of England's prowess as a sea-faring nation, and her new-won dominance of the sea, and in especial light of the strong similarities between a ship and the Elizabethan stage--with posts that could serve as masts, a wooden deck-like floor, a cabin-like tiring house wall, and an upper stage that could easily resemble an upper deck--it is surprising that so few scenes take place on board ships. Many plays include off-stage

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., F<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>-I<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>.

<sup>57</sup>Oman, History of the Art of War, 344.

sea battles--usually heard by people on land--but only four plays show battles with the stage depicted as a ship. And only one presents fighting on the stage.

Whore of Babylon includes a large-scale sea battle, and shows one--and perhaps another--of the participant ships. After the sound effects of a sea battle, a group of Kings enter and comment on the apparent defeat of their side. They view the battle--"What Hulkes are these, that are on fire?" [271]--and decide to flee, with "Away, away, hoise sailes vp and away" [272]. These words may or may not be intended to suggest that the kings are on board a ship: they may be on land, and intend to flee on board an off-stage ship. After their exit, the hero enters with "mariners and Gunners with Linstockes" as though on a ship. He calls for them to shoot, and all shout "Board, board, hoyse more sailes vp, they flie, shoot, Shoot." There is a stage direction for a peal of shot, and they all exit [273-4]. No more is heard of this until several scenes later when the hero and his crew enter and refer to their victory.

In Heywood's I Fair Maid of the West, is a scene on board an English ship. A cannon shot is heard, and a man enters with word of an approaching Spanish man-of-war. A sailor enters above and speaks of the rapid approach of the enemy, and the lower stage group prepares for battle. A shot

is fired in answer to the foe, and then with a cry of "Boord, boord, amaine for England," they exit to off-stage battle [315-17].

Fortune By Land and Sea, by Heywood and Rowley, has a similar scene. The authors carefully establish that the scene is on board a ship: the hero enters "like a Captain of a ship, with Sailors and Mariners," and says, "Gentlemen, and my merry mates at sea." [413]. A boy is sent to the main-top to look for pirates. He appears "Above" with word of a not-yet-identifiable ship in the distance. The lower-stage group prepares for battle, and when the boy announces approaching pirates, there is an exeunt to battle stations. Then the pirates enter, as though on the other ship, "furnisht with Sea devices fitting for a fight," and establish that they are hard upon the hero. They decide that he is too strong for them, but discover that they are sinking and cannot flee. They exit to prepare for grappling, and the hero and his force re-enter and ready themselves to board the pirate ship. At the end of a long rallying speech, they exit to an off-stage fight. [415-18]

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58The style of the verse changes drastically at this point: it seems likely that the ensuing scene was written by a different author. Both Rowley and Heywood had written battle scenes in other plays, but it seems here as though one was called upon to write the battle--perhaps Heywood, with many more battles than Rowley in his canon, was the "specialist."



The most sophisticated shipboard battle of all (and one of the most clever extant uses of the Elizabethan stage) is in Daborne's A Christian Turned Turk. At the opening of the play Ward and his crew enter, and establish that they are on board ship. They sight a ship, and discovering that it is being chased by pirates, decide to rescue and plunder it themselves. They exit to make ready for the fight. Then Lemot and his group enter, on board the pursued ship, now free from the pirates, but pursued by "no lesse a monster." Lemot says "See how they beare vp to vs," and at this point "Enter Ward, Gismund, Sailers aboue" [193-5]. The two groups shout threats to each other, and the stage becomes two ships at once, grappled together and ready for hand to hand combat. Then there is an exit, and the major part of the fight rages off-stage [196-7]. The rest of the scene is clouded by a lack of stage directions. Ward enters with a dying comrade, they establish that Lemot's force is beginning to weaken, and exit. Then a stage direction calls for one of Ward's lieutenants to shout ("within"), and Lemot and a companion have lines to speak, although there is no entrance for them. Then Ward's lieutenant is heard (or perhaps he too has entered), and the text reads:

[Lieutenant].

Enter, Enter, Enter.

Zounds the slaue winkes and fights.

Ward. A Ward, A Ward, A ward, shoute.  
 Downe with them, downe with them, away let him go  
 ouerbord, where he a second Alexander, ther's not  
 a man of them liues, but shall go ouer-board . [198]

At this point both forces are on the stage in their entirety.

The lieutenant and Ward enter and undoubtedly fight with Lemot and his friend. How many more of Lemot's group are with him, and how many more of Ward's group enter with him, is not suggested. The fact, however, that the major part of the fray is off-stage up to this point would make any on-stage activity seem a skirmish rather than a battle in its largest sense.

Worth noting is the moment when the stage becomes two ships. With one force above and the other below, the stage picture becomes identical to an assault scene. The stage door is not, however, localized as a doorway, gate, or passageway from one ship to another, so there is no reason to assume that assault techniques would affect the staging. If wall scaling was possible in the theatre for which this play was written,<sup>59</sup> Daborne has ignored what seems an excellent device. After the two "ships" have grappled together, it would have been

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<sup>59</sup>It is 'attributed,' only, to either the King's men or to the Queen's Revels: there is a scaling in Humour Out Of Breath, presented in the Whitefriar's Theatre where the Revel's group played, and a scaling in the King's men's Devil's Character.

especially effective for the attacking group to swarm over the tiring house wall and to attack the lower stage group in sight of the audience. That he did not choose to use this approach may be a further sign of an inherent difficulty in scaling.

These four plays, with one possible exception, are quite close to each other in date of composition: Whore of Babylon is dated 1606, Fortune By Land and Sea, 1609, Christian Turned Turk, 1610, and I Fair Maid, 1610 (although Bentley suggested that the latter may date before 1603).<sup>60</sup> Four extant plays cannot, however, be properly considered a vogue.<sup>61</sup>

### Duels and Fights

Duelling was a staple in every type of Elizabethan play, and battles abound with it. Thirty-eight plays call, during such scenes, for duels or for fights which involve three to a half-dozen named men at once. Several stage directions for on-stage clashes between armies include instructions for particular characters to fight each other: in Selimus there is "Tonombey beats Hali and Cali in. Selim beats Tonombey in"

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<sup>60</sup>See Play List.

<sup>61</sup>Cf. the ship-board opening of The Tempest--1611.

[2461-2]; in Lochrine, "Hubba enter at their backs, and kill Debon" [833]; and in Edmond Ironside, "Edmond drive Canutus offe the stage" [963-4]. In II Iron Age, while two men fight on the stage, the two armies enter and divide them and all but one of the original combatants exit [361]. In Lovesick King there is "the King slain" [4], and in Golden Age there is "Tytan is slaine" [50], but in neither play is there any hint as to which actor does the slaying. All of the above directions seem to be authorial:<sup>62</sup> no similar directions can be attributed to the hand of a stagekeeper.

Many plays include more than one duel: there are four in Valiant Welshman and I Henry IV, five in Stukely, and seven in I Jeronimo. They appear at all points during battles. In Coriolanus [I.vi-viii] a duel between Martius and Aufidius is the first visual sign of a field-battle.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>See Play List.

<sup>63</sup>The stage direction at this point reads:

Alarum, as in Battaille.  
Enter Martius and Auffidius at several doores.  
[I.viii]

Jorgensen, in Shakespeare's Military World, 318, stated that the first part of the direction is unique, and means on-stage battle. Although the exact phrasing appears to be unique in extant texts, the context is not, and it is most likely that this is merely a call for a continuation or renewal of earlier sound effects. Cf. above, p. 228-29.

In Alphonsus of Aragon a chorus enters and tells us that the battle has begun, and two men enter at separate doors and duel [372-94]. Duels are also the first signs of battle in several sequences in which armies first confront each other or march across the stage enroute to battle: in Cymbeline [V.ii], Macbeth [V.vii], II Iron Age [361], and in Woodstock [2857]. In Selimus [657-672] two duels in a row begin things. I Henry IV [V.i] and Valiant Welshman [I<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>] begin battles with on-stage clashes of armies which exit fighting, after which two duelling men enter. One dumb-show battle in Edmond Ironside is portrayed in its entirety by a duel and a chorus. [973-980]

Few battles actually come to a conclusion, as far as the plot is concerned, with a duel, although in several the last piece of on-stage action is a duel between two leaders. The Richmond-Richard duel in Richard III [V.v], and the problematic Macduff-Macbeth duel in Macbeth [V.viii] are typical.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Others of this type are in Alphonsus of Aragon [1780], True Tragedy of Richard III [2001], Stukely [E<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>], Birth of Merlin [F<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>], Brazen Age [224], Selimus [2461], and Valiant Welshman [B<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>]. There may be an echo of Macbeth in Valiant Welshman. In Macbeth the villain is on stage and the hero enters to fight with the words "Turne Hell-hound, turne." In Valiant Welshman the villain (who has just beaten a group off the stage) is alone on stage, and the hero enters and says, "Turne thee, Vsurper."

The majority of stage directions for duels do no more than instruct two actors to fight, and (usually) for one to win or at least dominate. In the Seven Deadly Sins 'plot' there is "Enter ferrex at one dore. Porrex at an other The[y] fight ferrex is slayn" [lines 38-9]. In Weakest Goeth to the Wall there is "Enter Ferdinand pursuing Don Hugo, cutting him soundly" [1795-6]. In Valiant Welshman there is a duel between a soldier and a standard bearer: "They fight, and Constantine winneth the Eagle, & waueth it about" [I<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>]. The Contention includes a unique duel not in II Henry VI: in the latter young Clifford enters in the midst of a battle, picks up his father, and exits with him [V.ii]; in the Contention he picks up his father, Richard enters, Clifford puts down his father, fights with Richard till he flees, picks up his father again, and exits [H<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>]. In Stukely there are three duels in a row:

Enter abdeimeleck and sebastian, fighting: after them againe, Muly Mahamet, and Muly hamet: then antonio: with some other passing away, then they retired back . . . [I<sub>1</sub>v]<sup>65</sup>

In Shoemaker a Gentleman one duel leads to another: two men fight, one gets the other down, a third enters, fights the

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<sup>65</sup>Although "some other" suggests, at first glance, an authorial text, the past tense in the next phrase (which refers to the entrance of the army as though in retire) suggests "reporting."

victor, and drives him off [ $F_4^V$ ]. Two duels at once, which may have been frequent in excursions, are called for in the famous Hal-Hotspur, Falstaff-Douglas scene in I Henry IV [V.iv], and a double duel leads to a single duel in I Jeronimo: two pairs of duelling men enter, and one of each pair is slain; then friends of each slain man enter, mourn the dead men, see each other, and duel [332-3]. The latter scene is preceded by another duel, and is followed by a group fight, another duel, another group fight, and a final duel, making it one of the most extensive series of fights and duels in the period.

Several duels occur with one or more characters who witness the fighting, but who do not join in. Thersites so watches, in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida, and acts as commentator on the Paris-Menelaus duel:

The Cuckold and the Cuckold maker are at it:  
 now bull, now dogge, lowe; Paris lowe; now  
 my double hen'd sparrow; lowe Paris lowe;  
 the bull has the game: ware hornes ho?  
Exit Paris and Menelaus. [V.vii.9-12]

We may wonder how closely the actors were expected to follow the "program" set by Thersites' lines, or whether it mattered. Another such witness is Horatius in Rape of Lucrece, who has been involved in fighting earlier in the battle, but who neither joins in nor comments upon a duel between the

villain and the hero of the play. The stage direction calls for a long and detailed fight:

Alarum, a fierce fight with sword and target, then after pause and breathe. [Each has a short speech--then] Alarum, fight with single swords, and being deadly wounded and pausing for breath, making a stroak at each together with their gauntlets they fall. [252]<sup>66</sup>

In Trial of Chivalry a duel on the battlefield is witnessed by a group: Roderick is being sought by his opponents, two of whom are on the stage when he enters, pursued by Philip. As Philip and Roderick fight, two groups attempt to enter and rescue Roderick, but are held back by Philip's friends:

they fight and keepe them backe: Rodoricke would scape, still kept in the midst, and kild by Philip. [13<sup>r</sup>]

Duels can be made up on the spot by a pair of adequate swordsmen; when more than two men fight, the actors must almost necessarily follow a pre-arranged program. The presence of a substantial number of often complicated fights suggests, more than other battle activity, the necessity for a more than superficial rehearsal. A few are worth examination.

Some fights develop out of duels. In Woodstock, the entire on-stage manifestation of battle is presented in a

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<sup>66</sup>A similar pause for rest between two men occurs in I Jeronimo [333].



slowly growing fight. After the two armies exit to off-stage battle, Greene and Cheney enter and duel. Cheney's compatriot, Arrondel, enters, and Greene offers to fight them both. They fight and Greene is slain. As the two victors prepare to carry his body off the stage, four of Greene's friends and some soldiers enter and attempt to rescue the body. They fight. Then three friends of Cheney and Arrondel enter and "beats them all away" [2847-2876]. In I Jeronimo, Andrea and Balthezar meet in the midst of the battle:

They fight, and andrea hath balthezer downe. Enter Portugales and releue balthezer and kil andrea.  
[107-108]

A favorite dramatic device is the portrayal of a fight between one or a few men against a greater number. In Guy of Warwick there is:

Alarum Excursions. Enter Sultan and Zorastes flying, Guy and they Fight, Zorastes Escapeth, Guy taketh Sultan Prisoner. [C<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>]

In Locrine is a fight between a country character, Dorineus, and two men. He "Strikes them both downe with his club" [1294]. The lone or outnumbered men do not always win: both Shakespeare in Troilus and Cressida [V.viii] and Heywood in I Iron Age [320] show the lone Hector slain by Achilles and his Myrmidons. Heywood's Achilles is particularly vicious--after Hector is slain "then Achilles wounds him

with his Launce." One of the heros in Stukely is set upon and slain by a company of soldiers [ $L_2^R$ ], and in Valiant Welshman Caradoc is caught on-stage with his wife and child by a group of Roman soldiers:

They fight, sometimes Caradoc rescueth his Wife, somtimes his daughter, and killeth many of the Romanes, & at last, they beate him in, and take his Wife and Daughter. [ $G_4^V$ ]

In Hector of Germany, two men break off a duel to join forces against a group who "Charge vpon them, and the [one] taken Prisoner on the Stage, [the other] beaten off." [ $D_2^R$ ]

In another such scene, Heywood used the structure and the conventions of the stage to great advantage in his depiction of Horatio at the bridge, in Rape of Lucrece. In the midst of a battle between the Romans and the Tarquins (after several skirmishes have shown the Romans being beaten back toward Rome) a group of Romans enter and establish that they are at the foot of the bridge over the Tiber. All but Horatio leave to break down the bridge.

Alarum, Enter Tarquin, Porsenna, and Aruns with their pikes and Targeters.

All. Enter, enter, enter.

A noise of knocking downe the bridge, within.

Hor. Soft Tarquin, see a bullwarke to the bridge, . . .

See with this Target do I buckler Rome,

And with this sword defie the puissant army . . .

Por. One man to face an host!

Charge souldiers . . .

Aruns. Vpon them [sic] Souldiers. Alarum, Alarum.

At this point two men enter "in severall places . . . above" and comment on the fight. One is a compatriot of Tarquin, and is on a hill outside the city, and the other is a Roman, presumably in the city. Finally there is the sound of the falling of the bridge, and Horatio exits to leap into the Tiber, leaving the Tarquins behind. [243-4]

A perhaps similar use of the stage as at the edge of a narrow passage occurs in Cymbeline, although the text is not clear. With the Holinshed source<sup>67</sup> and the description of the scene in V.iii, it is possible to piece together the intended sequence. The sounds of the battle are heard off-stage--and in this case things would be especially clear if the sounds came from one side of the tiring house only--and the Britons enter as though in flight. The Briton King, Cymbeline, enters and is captured by pursuing Romans. Then, through an opposite door, three Britons, and then a fourth, enter and make a stand at the door as though it is a narrow lane through which the fleeing Britons must pass. The Britons are turned back upon the pursuing foe, there is a fight, and the King is rescued. The newly heartened Britons then pursue the Romans off the stage. [V.ii]

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<sup>67</sup>Ellis, II, 155.

Duels and fights serve a variety of purposes. The basis of them all is, undoubtedly, their spectacular appeal, and as such they add variety, color, and a comparatively simple means for showing the physical side of battle. Those which involve minor characters and military lieutenants and which do not make any change in the tide of battle often seem designed to serve in this way: examples are the Paris-Menelaus duel in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida [V.vii], and the duel between the lieutenant Antonio and "some other," in Stukely [ $L_1^V$ ]. In many cases, however, they forward the plot as well. Sometimes, as in Martius' fight at the gates of Corioli, in Coriolanus [I.iv], and in the Macbeth-Young Siward duel, in Macbeth [V.vii], they demonstrate the prowess or bravery of a major character. Most duels and fights between a major character and an opposing minor character seem to serve this way--they almost always occur at the beginnings or middles of battles. Plays with common-man heroes or featured characters often show them doing brave deeds on the battle-field (although never to the exclusion of similar deeds by the invariably noble leaders).<sup>68</sup> Many help to establish the relationships between characters.

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<sup>68</sup>Shoemaker a Gentleman [ $G_1^F$ ], Larum for London [796-98], Stukely [ $E_2^V$ ], Four Prentices [234].

In Coriolanus [I.viii] Martius and Aufidius demonstrate, in their duel and the ensuing fight, the basis for their conflict throughout the play. One series of duels in I Henry IV brings to a resolution the relationship between Hal and his father. [V.iii-iv]

When military leaders meet, they usually do so only at the end of the fray and there is rarely any further on-stage manifestation of battle. Such duels tend to occur when the leaders have been antagonists in more than merely battle,<sup>69</sup> and become both the climax of the battle and of the play or a good part of it. They occur as early as Alphonsus of Aragon and True Tragedy of Richard III, and as late as Brazer Age and Valiant Welshman, but are absent in plays equally early and late. They are not the rule--many more battles end without them than with them--and there seems to be no noticeable relationship to them and to authors, theatres, or periods.

It is not safe to assume, of course, that duels and fights did not occur unless they are mentioned in the script. Seventeen plays call only for clashes of armies and for excursions. When armies meet at the beginnings of battles, it is likely that the invariably on-stage leaders pair off

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<sup>69</sup>See above, p. 375.

and duel. When armies clash in the midst of a battle, it would undoubtedly have been necessary for the leaders to enter with them for purposes of identification, and they may often have fought at such times as well. An additional six plays call merely for excursions. I have already expressed my reasons for believing that the Excursions in Henry V [IV.iv] included fighting by at least four or five most vile and ragged foils, and it is most likely that many others included fighting, even with major characters.<sup>70</sup>

### Battle Action

Although there was a great deal of on-stage fighting during battles, there is not a great deal of evidence about the manner in which it was carried out. A few late comments exist: Nabbes, in his Prologue to Hannibal and Scipio,

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<sup>70</sup>In Troublesome Reign, for example, there is: "Excursions. The Bastard pursues Austria, and kills him" [E<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]. In the parallel sequence in King John there is merely "Excursions," followed by the entrance of the Bastard with Austria's head [III.ii]. It seems likely that the latter excursions included fighting, of some kind, between the two.

Only fourteen plays--of the texts that are at all dependable--depict clashes of armies with no other on-stage fighting. These date from 1590 to 1620, in public and private theatres, and include several authors that have given us much on-stage battling, so again, there seems to be no apparent pattern in the variation. For further discussion of the roles of fights and duels in battles, see below, pp. 401-7.

spoke of the "horrid sight: / And the more horrid noise of target fight / By the blue-coated Stage-keepers" [A<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>].

Fowler, playing a mighty warrior in another Caroline play, had been involved in a comic incident in which the soldier-supers "fell down as they were dead e're he had toucht their trembling Targets."<sup>71</sup> Gayton wrote of the common problem of holiday riots in which the spectators at "some tearing Tragaedy full of fights and skirmishes" would mount the stage and make a "more bloody Catastrophe amongst themselves, then the Players did."<sup>72</sup> St. Amant wrote of the fear and excitement shown by the audience, especially among the women, during the combats and skirmishes during stage battles.<sup>73</sup>

There are, unfortunately, no comparable comments and reports from before the Caroline period. The closest we have is the brief comment by Sidney who wrote about two armies that "flie in" to present a pitched field,<sup>74</sup> and the Wife's description of a battle, in Knight of the Burning Pestle, as she instructs Ralph to "skirmish, and let your flags fly, and cry, kill, kill, kill" [2H<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>]

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<sup>71</sup>Cf. Bentley, J. C. S., I, 318.

<sup>72</sup>Quoted in Bentley, J. C. S., II, 690-1.

<sup>73</sup>Jusserand, Shakespeare in France, 128. See above, p.9.

<sup>74</sup>Sidney, Defense of Poesy, 38.

Many stage directions (most of which appear to be authorial) for particular business during battles, suggest the manner in which the author envisioned the activity. Some call for speed:

Enter two Spaniards running, with theyr swords drawne. [Larum, 1126]

Enter a many French men flying. After them Prince Edwardruning. [Edward III, F<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>]

he runs in [to the battle]. [I Tamburlaine, 27]

Enter a messenger runinge. [Ed. Ironside, 1332]

Champaignes wife hurried by two rascall soldiers. [Larum, 730]

He killeth Cherseoli, and flieth.  
[Selimus, 672]

Baiazeth flies, and he pursues him.  
[I Tamburlaine, 44]

Spaniards and Moors with drums and colours flye over the stage, persued . . .  
[Lust's Dominion, E<sub>10</sub><sup>r</sup>]

Although it might be argued that such directions stem from an attempt to make a scene move quickly in order to make it short, most of them occur in sequences in which there is much more battle activity. Even if the author had speed of performance time in mind, the context would make the activity seem, to an audience, the manifestation of the flurry of battle. The various forms of fly suggest an author thinking in terms of the speed of battle rather than the speed of performance.



Another group of stage directions calls for strong and vigorous, even violent, action:

Enter two battailes strongly fighting.

[James IV, 655]

after a good pretty fight . . . [Stukely, E<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>]

Go & make your liuely battel & let it be longe eare you can win y Citle. [Horestes, D<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]

beats them all away. [Woodstock, 2875]

Edmond drives Canutus offe the stage.

[Ed. Ironside, 963]

Talbot pursueth the Dolphin, and driueth him.

[I Henry VI, I.v]

Jupiter ceazeth the roome . . . [Golden Age, 23]

assayle the walls. [Edmond Ironside, 914]

Here is a very fierie assault on all sides, wherein the prentices doe great seruice.

[Edward IV, 20]

a fierce fight with sword and target.

[Rape of Lucrece, 252]

pursuing Don Hugo, cutting him soundly.

[Weakest Goeth to the Wall, 1795-6]

pursue . . . furiously. [Larum, 637-8]

let Horestes drau him vyolentlye. [Horestes, D<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]

Still another group calls for characters or groups to depict attitudes or moods:

Enter . . . wonderful mellancoly.

[Wounds of Civil War, 2074]

Locrine & Estrild enter again in a maze.

[Locrine, 2063-4]

Canutus gives back an[d] flies. [Ed. Ironside, 987]

Patroclus dying. [I Iron Age, 312]

a rabble of poore souldiers [make] a scuruy march. [Hoffman, 1125]

They are . . . diuided by the two armies, who confusedly come betwixt them. [II Iron Age, 361]

A confused fray. [Golden Age, 22]

[army enters] wounded and dismayed.

[I Edward IV, 21]

March ouer brauelie . . . with all their pompe brauelie. [James IV, 2406-8]

A final group includes a great variety of realistic detail:

Enter Clem falling for haste.

[I Fair Maid of the West, 315]

busie themselues about Herbert. [Oldcastle, 57]

The children gets fast holde, and hang vpon the Spaniards. [Larum, 1139]

Striuing to get againe his weapons. [Larum, 719-21]

a fierce fight with sword and target, then after pause and breathe . . . being deadly wounded and painting for breth . . . they fall.

[Rape of Lucrece, 252]

They fight and breath afresh. [I Jeronimo, 333]

The French leape ore the walles in their shirts . . . halfe ready, and halfe vnready.

[I Henry VI, II.i]

Enter . . . in his night-gowne all vnready.

[II Iron Age, 381]

Alarum, with men and women halfe naked.

[King Leir, 2475]

Caradoc flings downe his Armes. [Valiant Welshman, I<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]

enter three or fowre souldiers and his Auntient  
with his cullors, and Scilla after them with his  
hat in his hand, they offer to flie away.

[Wounds of Civil War, 333-7]

### Special Effects--Blood

Playwrights incorporated a variety of special visual effects into battles, using blood, special costumes, and special props. Ample evidence exists that stage blood of some kind was in wide-spread use from the earliest plays until the closing of the theatres,<sup>75</sup> and it appears to have been a staple in battle scenes. As early as 1588, when, in II Tamburlaine, "Sigismond comes out wounded" [91],<sup>76</sup> and as late as 1640 when St. Amant saw a character in a stage battle cry out while bleeding,<sup>77</sup> and in Public and Private theatres in the years between, the blood flowed like wine (which, in some early cases, it may have been).<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>See Kirschbaum, "Shakespeare's Stage Blood," 517-18; W. J. Lawrence, Pre-Restoration Stage Studies, 237-41; Reynolds, Red Bull, 41 and 85; and Montague Summer, The Restoration Theatre, 201-2.

<sup>76</sup>OED defines wound as an external injury, and Shakespeare always speaks of it as visual, so it seems safe to assume that wounds in stage directions are calls for blood.

<sup>77</sup>Jusserand, Shakespeare in France, 128.

<sup>78</sup>Cf. the famous "little bladder of Vineger prickt" in Cambyses, D<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>.

In a few cases, the blood is seen on weapons.<sup>79</sup> In most cases, however, people are covered with it. In Lochrine there is "Albanact run in, and afterwards enter wounded" [835]; Prince Hal enters bleeding in I Henry IV [V.iv]; two men enter "bloudy and wounded" in Larum for London [1570]; in II Antonio and Mellida, "Enter Piero . . . his armes bare, smeer'd in blood, a poniard in one hand bloodie" [36-7];<sup>80</sup> wounded and bleeding men twice enter in Sophonisba [13 & 24]; Brutus enters "all bloody" in Rape of Lucrece [249]; the "wounded" Scarus discusses his gashes at length in Antony and Cleopatra [IV.vii]; and in Coriolanus, Martius appears to be dripping blood from every seam and pore after the battle of Corioli. [I.iv-ix]

Ben Jonson's slighting comment about the players who "in the tyring-house bring wounds to scarres"<sup>81</sup> not only suggests a more than fleeting emphasis on gory make-up, but fits well with the pattern that (in battles at least) blood-

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<sup>79</sup>Swords in Travels of the Three English Brothers [D<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>], I Iron Age [296], and Osmond the Turk [A<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]; a poniard in II Antonio and Mellida [37].

<sup>80</sup>Cf. "Enter Virginius with his knife, that and his arms astrip up to the elbowes all bloudy . . ." in Appius and Virginia, Lucas, Complete Works of Webster, III, 211.

<sup>81</sup>Quoted in Chambers, E. S., IV, 248.

stained characters enter from off-stage battle.<sup>82</sup>

Although blood appears in early plays, its use seems to step up after 1600-1605, and to have been especially popular with the Queen Anne's company and with the King's men.<sup>83</sup> Vinegar would not serve to coat weapons, nor would it make wounds that were easily visible on the skin. It may be, then, that sometime around the turn of the century a successfully realistic stage blood was developed.<sup>84</sup> It is quite likely that it was often used, by any company that had it, even when stage directions did not specifically call for

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<sup>82</sup>The few cases in which actors appear to use some sort of trick apparatus to bleed in sight of the audience (e.g. "Smite him, he bleedes," in I Robin Hood [C<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>], the use of the "3. violls of blood & a sheeps gather," in Battle of Alcazar [Greg, Two Elizabethan Stage Abridgements, 32], etc.), do not occur during battle scenes.

<sup>83</sup>Other spectacular occurrences, in non-battle scenes, are in the Anne's Shoemaker a Gentleman, Golden Age, and Brazen Age [see Reynolds, Red Bull, 85], and the blood-bath over the dead Caesar in Julius Caesar [III.i], and the "Bleeding Sergeant" in Macbeth [I.ii]. See also the Elegy on Burbadge, quoted in Chambers, E. S., II, 309.

<sup>84</sup>The close association with the two companies hints that the formula may have been kept a secret. The Grand Guignol company in Paris was very proud of the fact that their stage blood, mixed fresh each day, actually coagulated, and the special recipes--a light red for fresh wounds and a dark red for old wounds--were closely guarded. See P. E. Schneider, "Fading Horror of the Grand Guignol," 58, and "Paris Writhes Again," 46.

it. However, even today stage blood is awkward to handle on the stage: it is messy, it smears costumes, it leaves stains, and it must be washed off before an actor can reappear in a new scene. That it does not appear too often in the context of battles, and that it seems to always appear when the battle is off-stage, may suggest that Elizabethan companies were not quickly moved to endanger their expensive costumes when the flurry of on-stage activity was high. As a vivid effect it was excellent, but it must have been saved for moments when it carried the greatest impact. Lady Macbeth has blood-stained hands, but blood is not called for in the battle several scenes later. It may have been used, of course, but the effect of the sleep-walking scene--still one of the most vivid and memorable scenes in Shakespeare, and largely because of the blood--would have been lessened if the blood flowed too freely in other parts of the play.

### Costume

Costuming has already been discussed, and it can be assumed that there was normally neither time nor necessity for change during a battle. However, a few special effects of dress occur. In I Jeronimo, in the midst of a battle, "Enter Rogero and Alexandro in their shirts" [87]. Again,

in Sophonisba, Massinissa, who has earlier been shown putting on his armour, is called upon to "Enter . . . in his gorget and shert" [24]. In Hector of Germany, two men about to engage in single combat "Enter . . . Armd, and in theyr shyrtts . . ." [I<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>]. There would be a certain amount of bravado involved in the discarding of armor in the midst of battle (although Massinissa keeps at least his gorget), and these directions may therefore have been part of an attempt to create the effect of the heat and furor of battle.

#### Properties: Weapons

Aside from the many weapons that were carried and wielded, several special prop weapons appear. In Edward III, a character who has previously entered with a lance enters during a battle "bearing . . . his shiuered Lance" [F<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>]. In Lust's Dominion a character enters "with a broken sword" [E<sub>8</sub><sup>r</sup>]. Special effects were not limited to shattered weapons: in Rape of Lucrece we find "Enter Tarquin with an arrow in his brest" [249]; in Caesar and Pompey, a stage direction probably added by the King's men after 1631 reads "enter Crassinius, a sword as thrust through his face" [378]; and in III Henry VI, where the Folio version reads merely "Enter Clifford Wounded" [II.vi] the "reported" True Tragedy reads "Enter Clifford, wounded with an arrow

in his necke" [D<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>].<sup>85</sup> A weaponless man defends himself with stones in Travels of the Three English Brothers [D<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>]. At one point in I Iron Age, a group of soldiers enter "with burning staues and fire-bals" [314], but before they can put them to use, a truce is called. The throwing of stones can be easily faked on the stage, but flaming brands are difficult to fake, and their use during the flurry of battle scenes, however spectacular, must have been fraught with danger. Perhaps the generally spectacular atmosphere of Heywood's Ages plays made the actors willing to take such risks.<sup>86</sup>

### Other Properties

Elizabethan plays are full of property heads, some carried on poles, some under arms, and some in baskets. But it may be that other segments of the body were used.

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<sup>85</sup>The latter detail, by the way, derives from Holinshed's Chronicles. This raises the question of the transmission of stage directions: someone, and it seems most likely to have been the author of the play, found the detail in Holinshed, and yet the information does not seem to have been transmitted to the actors by way of the (assumed) author's manuscript. If the author was present at rehearsal, he could have told them what to do.

<sup>86</sup>See also Reynolds' comments about the use of fire on-stage: Red Bull, 171-2.



Henslowe's inventory includes "Item, The Mores lymes."<sup>87</sup> Greg suggested that the limbs were used in the Battle of Alcazar, but in this play the Moor is brought in drowned--a situation hardly warranting the expense of a special dummy. They may have had another use, however. In 1579, Holinshed saw a show given before the Queen in which two groups did battle. The men on the losing side fell to the ground, and the victors marched over the bodies of their enemies, and let drop legs and arms of men, "well and liuelie wrought . . . as bloody as might be" [6I<sub>5</sub><sup>v</sup>]. We know that dummies were used for spectacular effects: in Soliman and Perseda two people are thrown from the top of a tower, in Selimus a body is hurled down from above to fall on spears, and in Massacre at Paris--performed by a Henslowe group--the body of the Admiral is thrown out of his window.<sup>88</sup> Even today it is common practice, for reasons of economy, for cinema battlefields to be strewn with many more dummies than actors.<sup>89</sup> In the lack of any substantiating evidence, it can only be the loosest hypothesis that Henslowe's property "limbs" were used in some way to decorate a "battle-

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<sup>87</sup>Greg, Henslowe Papers, 114; Foakes and Rickert, 318.

<sup>88</sup>See Lawrence, "Stage Dummies," Speeding Up Shakespeare, 130.

<sup>89</sup>Rosten, "The Twilight of Hollywood," The Observer, 22.

field" after or during a fray.

Near the end of a battle in Herod and Antipater, a stage direction calls for the entry of "A banner full of ruptures."<sup>90</sup>

The cumulative impression of the preceding directions is that playwrights worked in an atmosphere in which battle scenes were seen in terms of colorful spectacle full of realistic detail. They further suggest that many playwrights considered the visual aspects of battles to be important enough to emphasize in their scripts. Blood and props, appearing as they do with characters who enter from off-stage battles, seem to have been used to add to the feeling that a very real battle was in progress.

When we consider, however, that they cover a wide variety of activity, the examples are not plentiful enough to allow extensive generalizations. We cannot, for example, assume that such activity occurred only when called for by the script. Nor is it safe to assume that certain playwrights, because they are not frequently represented, did not think in terms of such spectacle. The great bulk of the examples are from anonymous writers and Henslowe hacks, but this may reflect the relationship of such writers to

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<sup>90</sup>Quoted in Reynolds, Red Bull, 86.

the companies for which they wrote, more than any attitude they had toward staging. Again, most of the examples are from the period before 1600 which, although it might suggest a lessening of interest and a concomitant falling off of vivid and realistic detail, may only reflect the fact that most battles occur in plays from that period, and that conventions and traditions associated with them were so well entrenched in later years that writers felt it less necessary to dwell on them. There are many calls for vivid action in Heywood and Queen Anne's plays in the post-1600 period, and few in King's men's plays. This may suggest that Heywood and the Queen Anne's men carried on an older tradition longer than did the King's men. But, there is much call for blood in Shakespeare, and a sword through the face of an actor appears in the post-1631 stage direction of a King's men's play, so it is not safe to assume differing traditions--it may again only reflect differing relationships between playwrights and companies. The "horrid sight" and "bloody Catastrophe" of stage battles were, according to contemporary report, still common in the Caroline period, and it is not likely that battles existed in several traditions. The later comments and directions, as few as they are, lead us to assume that although there were fewer battles, they were similarly conceived at all times.

### Battle Activity--Duration

Throughout this study it has been noted that stage directions are at their fullest when some out of the ordinary or unusual activity is presented, and that playwrights tended to make only brief reference to stage business already understood by the players--"showes as you knowe," "the song," "the battell," etc. The fact that stage battles are so common in extant texts, and were associated with the public stage long before the opening of the first theatre in London suggests a strong body of tradition with its inherent established conventions, and it should not surprise us, then, to find many stage directions to be rather bare, peremptory, and vague. But we are not safe in assuming that the barrenness of the stage directions reflects a barrenness in production.

Two of the most influential critics of this century, Bradbrook and Harbage, have stated their belief that such scenes were brief. Miss Bradbrook's early, but still important and influential book, Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy stated that "the actual attack was often of less importance than the parleys where insults were bandied and defiances hurled" [25]. Professor Harbage's Theatre for Shakespeare stated that the few visual displays of mass fighting seem to be little more than the beating back

of a momentary debouchment through the doors at the rear of the stage. [52]

Not everyone is in agreement. C. J. Sisson, reviewing Harbage's book, thought it difficult to argue for a limitation of business,<sup>91</sup> and Charles Shattuck felt that Harbage's attitude stemmed from a predilection for order and simplicity, and that the elimination of "huddled and confused" effects would eliminate effects vital to battle scenes.<sup>92</sup>

The fact is, of course, that we cannot know for sure. It is easy enough to see the reasons for the view of the "simplicists": we have the poetry--long, strong, often excellent, and fully grown--and we have little more in most stage directions than "they fight." On the other hand we know that, for modern audiences at least, too brief a battle seems ridiculous. Even in King Lear, where any extensive fighting would easily disrupt the focus of the last scenes of the play, audiences are often moved to giggles and open laughter at a very brief off-stage battle. The "long and lively" battle in Horestes, in 1567, and the battle described by St. Amant in 1640, in which ladies had time to munch

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<sup>91</sup>C. J. Sisson, "Review of Theatre for Shakespeare," MLR, LII (1956), 100-101.

<sup>92</sup>C. H. Shattuck, "Review," JEGP, LVI (1956), 138-42.

sweets and run the gamut of emotions, show us that at both ends of the period some plays, at least, had battles that were more than momentary. If there is no direct evidence, it is possible to make a few conjectures about length. Thersites' lines during the Paris-Menelaus duel in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida [V.vii.9-12] can be read in about fifteen seconds: if we allow five seconds for the actors to appear and establish themselves, and for them to be going off at the end of the speech, the fight would take a minimum of twenty seconds. If, in I Henry IV [V.iv], we allow five seconds for Hal and Hotspur to fight before the entrance of Falstaff; five seconds for Falstaff's lines; ten seconds for the entrance of Douglas, his duel with Falstaff, and his exit; and another five seconds for Hal and Hotspur, the duel could be over in twenty-five seconds. If we postulate a duel during an excursion from one door to another at the extremities of the forty-three foot wide Fortune stage, the fastest two men can traverse the distance with one in rapid retreat but with steady fighting, thrust, and counter-thrust, is twenty-five seconds. If the retreating man moves backward as quickly as possible, and defends himself at all, the distance can be made in ten seconds; it takes almost ten seconds, however, to manage only half the distance and to get in and out doors.

We cannot assume, of course, that such sequences were staged so quickly. The stage was, apparently, ideally suited to fencing displays--theatres were often used for fencing contests,<sup>93</sup> and were, with some people, as associated with such displays as with plays.<sup>94</sup> Actors were often associated with swords and swordsmanship,<sup>95</sup> and would undoubtedly have used such sequences to show their skill.<sup>96</sup>

Modern stage and cinema practice may serve as a basis for conjecture. In the duels I have been able to time--limiting them to those without dialogue, and in which the action is unbroken from face-off to finish--few run less than sixty seconds or more than one and one-half minutes. The longest was just less than two minutes, and the shortest

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<sup>93</sup>Chambers, E. S., II, 380, 382, 404, 410, 414, 470, 500, 529.

<sup>94</sup>Cf. Bentley, J. C. S., II, 442.

<sup>95</sup>See above: pp. 6, 10, 13, 17, et passim. Even Tarlton, a performer not usually connected with fighting, was a Master of Fence [E. S., II, 343], and one of the actor-sharers at Salisbury Court, in 1634, was often identified as a fencer [J. C. S., II, 442]. See also L. B. Wright, "Stage Duelling," 266.

<sup>96</sup>There is a famous story about Sir Lawrence Olivier as Macbeth: he loved to fence, and would throw himself wholeheartedly into the duel at the end of the play. He was of considerably more skill than the actor who played Macduff, and would often get carried away. His fellow actors would stand in the wings shouting, "Larry, Larry! You have to lose!"

forty-five seconds.<sup>97</sup> The type of weapon does not seem to matter: although heavier weapons cannot be as rapidly brandished as swords and rapiers, they make for duels with fewer passes but of about the same length.

It is likely, of course, that in the better companies, at least, the battle activity was adjusted to fit its function. Certain battles are undoubtedly more important than others. If we examine scenes in which dialogue occurs during battles, there seems to be a relationship between length and purpose.

The battle at the gates of Corioli is about three minutes long.<sup>98</sup> It has been preceded a short time before by an extended mob scene, so there is little call for mere spectacle for its own sake. The scene serves to show the prowess of Martius and his relationship to his fellows (and is therefore unlikely to have included any distracting

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<sup>97</sup>Even in West Side Story, the musical version of Romeo and Juliet, the fight-ballet includes a one-minute, fifteen-second duel (with knives) for the "Mercutio-Tybalt" pair, and a twenty-four second duel for "Tybalt-Romeo." Cf. the original-cast recording, Columbia (U. S. A.) OL 5230.

<sup>98</sup>As a completely arbitrary basis for comparison, I have assumed, in the following section, a dialogue speed comparable to modern performance, fifteen seconds for excursions and chases, twenty to thirty seconds for duels of minor characters and for group clashes, fifteen seconds for group entrances and exits, and one minute, fifteen seconds for major duels.



duels and forays by other characters), and is fairly brief. Cymbeline, not at all a "military" play, has a similarly short battle sequence--about two to three minutes. It probably serves some spectacular purpose--it is the first large group scene in quite a while--but its function is to demonstrate facets of the plot that are developed further in the play. The duel brings together the hero and the villain, and the ensuing skirmish shows how four Britons turn the tide of battle: it is not likely that any distracting side activity would have been staged.

Much of Troilus and Cressida deals with the continuing conflict of the Greeks and Trojans, and the many scenes of brief martial activity culminate in a nine-and-a-half minute battle sequence at the end of the play. Similarly, much of the focus of I Henry IV is on the impending civil war, and the battle sequence, which ties together many of the motifs that have developed--the Hal-Hotspur rivalry, the relationship of Hal and his father, the Falstaff adventures--lasts fourteen minutes.

The longest battle of all, in relation to the play, is in the very short I Jeronimo.<sup>99</sup> It lasts eleven minutes--over

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<sup>99</sup>The entire play takes forty-eight pages in Dodsley's Old English Plays, compared to 166 for Spanish Tragedy.

a fifth the length of the play.<sup>100</sup> There has been extended build-up to the sequence: from the beginning of the play the focus has been on the coming inevitable conflict between the two nations and between the two young noblemen whose duel is the climax of the battle. Every scene in the play refers to it, and the battle is almost the raison d'être of the play.

We cannot, of course, measure the importance of a battle only by the amount of dialogue in it. The structure of the play and the role of the battle within it must also be considered. The battles at the ends of Macbeth and Four Prentices are, if we measure dialogue and stage action, about the same length--five and a half minutes. But the plays are entirely different in content and in structure.

Heywood appears to have exercised a great deal of thought in the way he introduced scenes of fighting through-

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<sup>100</sup>The play's brevity tempts the speculation that a great deal of protracted battle spectacle filled out the two hours' traffic. It seems more likely that it was part of a longer bill. The "additions" to Spanish Tragedy in 1601 and 1602 [see Chambers, E. S., III, 396] suggest that it may have been considered too short for current performance practices. If so, The First Part of Ieronimo may be an addition to Spanish Tragedy designed for one of the several revivals [see E. S., IV, 23]. If, however, it was for the Revels (who may not have had access to Jonson's additions), such extensive on-stage fighting is unusual in a children's play.

out Four Prentices: the order in which they occur shows a gradual development in size and intensity. First there is a small dumb-show battle, then a series of fights with one or two men against many, then a scene in which two armies march on and confront each other but do not fight. Then there is a scene in which two armies confront, but settle matters with a single combat. Then there is an assault scene with some fighting on the walls, and finally an extended field battle that begins with a clash of armies on the stage, and continues with duels, fights, and dramatic rescues.

Macbeth, on the other hand, focuses primarily on the psychological development of its protagonist, and there is not a great deal of fighting in the play. It seems likely that the battle in Four Prentices would have to be of considerable length and size to serve as a climax to the preceding activity, whereas the battle in Macbeth would not need to be very long to have effect. Further, the battle in Four Prentices is designed to show the prowess of four brothers, and would have to include examples of each one in action, whereas the battle in Macbeth serves to show the downfall of the tyrant, and involves only two duels, one of which shows the prowess of the charmed Macbeth, and the other of which brings him into conflict with Macduff.

Even a so-called "long" battle must be seen in relationship to the play. In Wounds of Civil War a stage direction reads: "A great skirmish in Rome and long, some slaine" [1933]. In the context of the play, however, this is not a highlight, nor is it the final action in a sequence. Scylla has been advancing on Rome to claim it from his opponents. This battle establishes his victory, but it is followed by a series of killings in which he eliminates his foes; and these culminate a few scenes later in a battle in which the opposing leader is defeated. An earlier battle included dialogue as well as on-stage flurry, and the final battle does so too. This fray, with no dialogue, comes after a period in which there has been little on-stage spectacle (there is much in the play), and Lodge may have seen it as a place for some display. The stage direction seems, therefore, to be less a call for an unusually long battle than for one that is not too short nor without spectacular incident.

If the length of battles varied with their importance, the events depicted during them probably did the same. In battles in which there is a great deal of activity, there is a noticeable pattern of development. Duels at the beginning of frays are most often between a general and a minor opponent, or between two minor characters. The

same is true for duels and fights in the midst of battles. When two generals or heroes meet, it is always at the end of the battle, and there is almost never any other on-stage action afterward. This structure suggests that such a duel between leaders is conceived as the climax to a military clash, and would undoubtedly be longer and more spectacular than those before it. And when such climaxes depict the meeting of two major protagonists such as Richard III and Richmond or Macbeth and Macduff, we might expect the duel to be quite long.<sup>101</sup>

There is, of course, a point of diminishing returns. The most skillful actors, the most polished swordsmen, and the largest groups of performers available would not be able to sustain the illusion of battle obviously long. Care must be taken with the brandishing of even dull weapons. On-stage killings must be faked with a great deal of care, and too much repetition would lose impact as the audience watches ever more closely to see how it is done. And too long an on-stage battle without killing would create equal unrest.

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<sup>101</sup>The three-minute round in modern boxing may suggest a limit for both performers and for aficionados in the audience.

It may be that length was also affected by the change in the substance of drama.<sup>102</sup> It is possible that as the interest among playwrights shifted to another type of drama, there was a de-emphasis on battle activity in both the older plays when they were revived, and in newer plays.<sup>103</sup> However, there is no reason to assume that many members of the audience did not continue their taste for protracted spectacle. The thoughts of Greg and Cairncross about I Henry VI, that the copy for the 1623 Folio represents a version used in the theatre well after the time it was written,<sup>104</sup> suggest that perhaps as late as the early twenties, the King's men were using it in a version that included a great many extensive battle sequences.

The many battles that culminate in duels between military leaders, the presence of such leaders at the beginnings of battles, and their likely presence during group clashes in the midst of battles, suggest that the focus was on them throughout most of the fighting. Such a viewpoint hints

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<sup>102</sup>See below, p. 464.

<sup>103</sup>Note, for example, that in general the special effects dealing with on-stage activity are from before 1600, and those that bolster the effect of off-stage activity--blood and special props--from after.

<sup>104</sup>See Play List.

that battles were fought through their leaders, with the supers as mere fillers-out of the stage spectacle. A pointer in this direction is a minor one, but valid--in real life, drummers carried messages and participated in parleys;<sup>105</sup> but in plays such things are done by captains and generals. And it may be more than mere dramatic emphasis that calls for Richard III to be killed, not as he was historically by foot soldiers, but by the opposing general.<sup>106</sup>

Such a stage strategy would greatly simplify the problems of staging. The supers could participate in excursions and group clashes without recourse to a great deal of rehearsal. When a leader was on the stage they could follow him, and when he was not they could devote themselves to general bustle and scurry, knowing that their function was merely the creation of spectacle. Such a structure, with captains being followed by masses of anonymous yoemen, would create an atmosphere of Medieval warfare quite suitable to Chronicle plays.

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<sup>105</sup>See above, p. 40.

<sup>106</sup>Cf. also the comments on synecdochic directions, above, pp. 315-16.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE BATTLES CONTINUE: OTHER ON-STAGE ACTIVITY

#### Resters

With the battle raging off-stage, playwrights brought on a variety of sequences to further the plot, and to let the audience know the turns in the tide of battle. Many participants enter as though in momentary retirement from the nearby fray.

The most famous of this type is the entrance, in Henry V, of Henry and his force after their initial assault on Harfleur. The chorus tells us that the battle has begun, we hear the sounds of the assault, and then the army enters. Henry gives his oration to the troops, and they charge back to the off-stage assault [III.i]. A similar sequence occurs in I Fair Maid of the West, on board a ship. The defenders enter too exhausted to continue: a girl cheers them on, and, inspired by her, they charge back to the fray [317]. Sometimes, as in Stukely, a small group of men enter to rest, and another enters and cheers them back to the fight [ $K_4^V-L_1^F$ ]. In III Henry VI, one man enters to rest, and



then another; then a third calls them back [II.iii]. In Wounds of Civil War the leader of an assaulted city appears on the walls, "wonderful mellancoly," accompanied by soldiers, one of whom stirs him back to the fray [2072-2116]. A variation occurs in Edward III. The King enters to rest, and his followers enter and advise retreat: the King calls for one more try, and they all return [ $H_3^r$ ]. In I Henry IV the King and the princes enter to rest, and the King tries to talk one of the princes into retiring from the battle. He refuses, and the princes return to the fight. [V.iv]

Sometimes, as in Four Prentices [244] and in an earlier part of the battle in Edward III [ $H_3^r$ ] the resters merely talk about the turns and events of the battle. Sometimes, as in Richard III [V.iv] and in Sophonisba [24-25], they seek help or fresh supplies--in the latter instances the leaders come on calling for a horse.

Victims of the fighting sometimes enter, accompanied by others. In III Henry VI [V.ii] a wounded man is carried on by men that return to the fight--he is later carried away by another group. In Valiant Welshman [ $B_3^r$ ] a wounded man is brought on by his sons: he dies, and his sons return after swearing revenge. In Stukely [ $L_2^r$ ] a dead leader is carried on, and in Christian Turned Turk [197] two men

enter with a slain friend and discuss the frailty of life before they exit.

Resters do not always return to the fighting. In Antony and Cleopatra [IV.viii] two leaders enter and compare wounds, but before they can return word is brought that the battle is over. Many others, entering to rest, are discovered by the enemy and engage in fights or duels--Hector's discovery and slaying by Achilles and his Myrmidons in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida [V.vi] and in Heywood's I Iron Age [321], and the attack on the resting King Henry in I Henry IV [V.iv] are typical. All the on-stage activity during the big final battle in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida seems to take place at a place where the participants come to rest between forays.

In some instances characters enter from the battle as much to plot as to rest, and not all of these return to the fight. In I Jeronimo [329] two men enter and one is sent off to seek out an opponent not yet engaged in the battle; in II Robin Hood [H<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>] two men enter and one is sent off to spread rumors in a nearby town; and in I Edward IV [29] two men enter and one is sent off to organize a sneak attack on a nearby city. In Edward III [F<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>] the King retires from the fray to direct the battle from the distance via messengers.

Retreaters

Another group can be called Retreaters. Such characters leave the battle to escape. In most cases the dialogue tells us of their intent, and it is likely that their demeanor added to the effect--such terms as "flies," "flees," and "fleeing" are often used in connection with their entrances. Such a retreat is not always a final one: in Wounds of Civil War the forces of Scilla flee:

Then let enter three or fowre souldiers and his  
Auntient with his cullors, and Scilla after them  
with his hat in his hand, they offer to flie away.  
 [334-36]

Scilla gives a long speech at the end of which he takes the colors and returns to the battle. One soldier addresses his fellows, challenging them to return, and they all "Exeunt to the Alarum" [371]. (This, and other similar scenes--especially the Pistol-Nym-Bardolph section of Henry V [III.i]--hint at the real life problem of the recalcitrant soldier. They were very common, and often had to be beaten into battle.)<sup>1</sup> Lovesick King begins with a group retreat: they rest a moment at the edge of the fray, and most of them

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<sup>1</sup>See Paul A. Jorgensen's Shakespeare's Military World, 154-60. Cf. also Edward III [F<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>], mentioned in the text immediately below; the speech of the angry leader in II Edward IV [20]; Caesar and Pompey [II.iii]; and cf. also the attitude of Martius to the recalcitrant citizens of Rome, in Coriolanus.

exit, leaving several wounded behind. The enemy enters in pursuit, the wounded rise to fight, and the retreaters re-enter to fight again. [3]

Sometimes the characters merely cross the stage and flee, as in Battle of Alcasar [1301], and Orlando Furioso [441]. In Edward III [ $F_2^V$ ], as soon as the battle begins there is "Enter a many French men flying." Their leaders enter, deploring the retreat, and pursue them.

In most cases, however, the retreating men or groups play a brief scene before they leave the scene entirely. In I Tamburlaine [26] a fleeing king enters and tries to hide his crown, apparently in an effort to avoid excessive punishment upon capture. Tamburlaine enters and taunts him for his cowardice, and he flees as Tamburlaine returns to the battle. Woodstock [2887-2956] and Stukely [ $L_1^F$ ] include sequences quite similar to each other. In each case a King is on-stage, others enter and advise retreat, and all flee together. In Woodstock, as soon as the King and his group are off the stage, two more retreating men enter, and one turns on the other and takes him prisoner [2956]. In Stukely, after the others leave the stage, a prince enters disguised as a priest, and is captured by three or four of the enemy [ $L_2^V$ ]. In If It Be Not Good [336-41] a group of soldiers enters, debating flight. Several more men enter in retreat

and flee the scene, at which the first group decides to flee as well. In Locrine a stage direction calls for

Enter . . . Locrine and his followers driven back. Then let Locrine & Estrild enter again in a mass. [2061-4]

Locrine announces defeat, recounts the battle, and commits suicide. In Shoemaker a Gentleman [B<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>] a wounded King is carried on by his followers: he dies, and the rest flee. Retreaters do not always escape. In III Henry VI Rutland and his tutor enter, flying, and are caught and killed [I.iii]; and in the next scene the fleeing Richard of York is caught and killed. [I.iv]

In Battle of Alcazar one sequence uses retreaters as the basis for an extended scene. The battle is heard, and a group of retreating Moors enters and flies. Then a wounded Moor is carried on and dies in the company of his compatriots. A messenger enters with word that the battle has changed in favor of the Moors, and they all return to the fight. The sounds of battle are heard afresh, and then the retreating opponents enter and flee. [1301-1368]

We have already noted, in the section on Assaults, the common pattern in which one army exits from the city at the end of the battle. Many of these are the losers, and probably would have shown in the manner of their entrance that they were in retire. Many assaults also depict people that flee

from the city as the battle rages. The notorious flight of Sir John Falstaffe [sic throughout play] in I Henry VI [III.11] is made even more disreputable because he flees as soon as the battle begins. In Orlando Furioso [441] two men do the same. In II Tamburlaine [105] a wounded captain enters with his wife and child, fleeing an assaulted city. Three such scenes use flight to demonstrate an element of surprise. In King Leir men and women enter "halfe naked" and two defenders enter without doublets [2475].

In I Henry VI

The French leape ore the walles in their shirts.  
Enter seuerall wayes, Bastard, Alanson, Reignier,  
halfe ready, and halfe vnready. [II.1]<sup>2</sup>

During the sack of Troy, in Heywood's II Iron Age [384], the fleeing Priam, his son, and five or six women enter in night dress and flee at the sound of an alarum. People were still fleeing from assaulted cities as late as 1638-- in Osmond the Turk. [A<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>]

In the case of assaults it is always--except for the cowardly Falstaffe--members of the eventually losing side that flee. This is not always the case in field battles,

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<sup>2</sup>Shakespeare's eventual knowledge of the Leir play makes us wonder about the possible relationship of these scenes. The issue is clouded by the question of dates of composition and the textual history of the plays. See Play List.

but it is clear that playwrights found retreaters an economical and effective way to show turns of the tide in off-stage battles. Retreaters often comment on events, but the mere sight of retreating soldiers--soldiers that had been seen entering battle--would immediately communicate information to an audience. Except when retreaters return to the fray, most retreats occur at or near the end of the battle, and in such cases invariably signal an imminent end of fighting.

### Waiters

In a dozen or so instances people wait on the stage while a battle is fought. In I Tamburlaine [40] two opposing Queens stay on and wrangle while their husbands wrangle in the field. In Edward III [ $E_1^r$ ], after men have been dispatched to battle positions and the navy has been sent to meet the enemy fleet, a sea battle is "heard afar off," and discussed by a group that waits on-stage. A messenger brings them word of the outcome. In II If You Know Not Me [339-42] a group waits as the Armada is fought: three messengers in turn bring word of events. In Alphonsus of Germany [ $I_2^v-I_3^r$ ], Alphonsus, his wife, and one other dispatch a man to watch the battle and to bring word of the outcome. The three remain on the stage and have a brief family argu-

ment, and word is finally brought that their side has lost.

Three plays, if we accept the texts as they stand, depict groups that wait, without dialogue, on or at the walls of a city. The sequences in King John [II.i] and Troublesome Reign [C<sub>4</sub><sup>r-v</sup>] have been discussed above [see p. 365]. In Devil's Charter [30], after an army on the lower stage has threatened the city representatives on the walls, the city group exits and there is an off-stage cannonade after which the city fathers re-enter and concede: the effect intended seems to be that the cannonading is done by an off-stage contingent of the assaulting force while the on-stage contingent waits.

Several scenes depict one man alone on the stage awaiting the outcome of the battle. In Antony and Cleopatra [III.x] a man enters from watching a sea battle, no longer able to bear the sight. Four lines later another enters with news of the outcome. Later in the play two men are on the stage at the beginning of an off-stage sea battle. One exits to watch, and the other has a short soliloquy before the first returns with news. [IV.xii]

The most famous scene of this kind is in the last act of King Lear [V.ii]. This scene gives trouble in the theatre, and has been accused by A. C. Bradley of "extraordinary



ineffectiveness."<sup>3</sup> The battle sequence in its entirety reads as follows (after we have seen the anti-Lear army exit for battle):

Alarum within. Enter with Drumme and Colours, Lear, Cordelia, and Souldiers, over the Stage, and Exeunt.

Enter Edgar, and Gloster.

Edg. Heere Father, take the shadow of this Tree  
For your good hoast: pray that the right may thriue:  
If euer I returne to you againe,  
Ile bring you comfort.

Glo. Grace go with you Sir. Exit.

Alarum and Retreat within.

Enter Edgar.

Edgar. Away old man, giue me thy hand, away:  
King Lear hath lost, he and his Daughter tane. . .

Bradley and Spedding<sup>4</sup> felt that the battle would have to be inordinately short, or that the stage would have to be empty, save for Gloucester, for quite a time while the battle raged off-stage. Both felt the text to be in error. (Spedding further wanted to move the whole battle to a place between the fourth and fifth acts, and to fill the space with a battle piece by Handel.) Most modern directors seem to see the scene in the same way, and in the half-dozen or more productions of the play that I have seen in the past few years, the entire battle has been presented after the exit of Edgar, and finished at or before his re-entrance.

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<sup>3</sup>A. C. Bradley, Shakespearean Tragedy, 320.

<sup>4</sup>On the Division of Acts . . ., 15.

In most instances, the entire proceeding was greeted by at least mild laughter in the audience.

There is not, of course, any reason to assume that the battle was intended to be so short. Edgar at no time suggests that he intends to participate in the battle--his speech to Albany in the preceding scene states plainly that he intends to be ready to fight when the battle is finished. Nor, even if we assume that his exit is to the fray, is there any reason to assume that the battle would have waited upon his presence. Nor is it necessary to assume that the march across the stage of Lear, Cordelia, and soldiers preceded the battle. We know that the French army is on the side of Lear and Cordelia, but the stage direction does not mention it--it is quite possible that the presence of Cordelia in this group suggests that it is not a main force at all. The scene begins with an Alarum within: it seems most likely that the battle was intended to begin at this point, and that the Lear-Cordelia group, and later Edgar, are depicted as en-route to the already raging battle. Such an interpretation lengthens the battle somewhat, but does not entirely eliminate the few moments that Gloucester is alone on the stage. Edgar may be intended to exit in time to see that the tide has already turned and to re-enter almost immediately. It is even possible that



after Henry and his force make the assault on Harfleur. Four captains enter and establish that they are waiting for the fighting to renew--the battle has apparently simmered down to a stalemate.

### Watchers

A variation of waiting occurs when on-stage characters watch the battle and inform the audience, through dialogue, of the events. One of the finest extant examples of Elizabethan stagecraft focuses on two such watchers, in Bonduca. The battle begins with:

Alarums, Drums and trumpets in severall places  
afar off, as at a main battle.  
Enter Drusus: & penius (aboue)

Drus: here you may see vm all sir from this hill  
the country shoves of leuell.

pen: godes defend me  
what multitudes they are . . . [1459-65]

As the two men watch the battle a variety of sound effects is called for. Each sound is explained by the watchers, and they shift their sight from place to place and describe several phases of the battle. Penius instructs Drusus to wake him if anything special occurs, and sleeps. Then a scene on the lower stage depicts an event in the battle. Loud drums are heard, and Drusus awakes Penius to watch fresh events in the distance. After a time Penius sleeps again, and the lower stage again depicts several vignettes

in the battle. Shouts awaken Penius and the two observers watch a rout in the distance. Then a group of soldiers enter and fight on the lower stage while the two watch from above. The fighters stop to rest, and Drusus and Penius, bemoaning the final turn of the battle, exit. [1466-1699]

In Weakest Goeth to the Wall [1781-1853] is a sequence similar to the one in I Henry VI in which a man sits in a chair and awaits the outcome of a battle. In this case, the man says that he will be able to behold the fight. There are sounds of battle, and one man chases another across the stage. The sitter comments on this, and the two men appear again. The third time around the sitter engages the chaser in conversation for a moment. Then a messenger enters with word of the outcome.

In Whore of Babylon [271-2] a group watches an off-stage sea battle, and in Rape of Lucrece [242-4] two men--depicted as on opposite sides of the Tiber--watch Horatio at the bridge.

### Chorus

Although Choruses abound in the plays and often introduce a battle and/or enter immediately afterward to tell us of the outcome (and even, sometimes, to recount the events of the finished battle), they rarely tell us of the entire

battle. The Chorus in Henry V [III. Prol.] tells of the initial activity at Harfleur. In Caesar and Pompey [II.ii] the Chorus similarly enters to tell us that the battle has begun and goes on to tell us of the beginnings and the eventual turn of the tide: then a group of retreaters enter, and the closing portion of the battle is played by actors. In Alphonsus of Aragon [1655-80] the battle begins with actors and sound effects, the Chorus enters and tells us details of the action, and then the ending of the battle is presented by the actors.

### Two Combinations

Two scenes in plays by Shakespeare are worth noting for the way he used the above effects in combination to present striking stage effects. One of them is rather simple and almost formal in its effect, and the other is quite vivid and realistic. In III Henry VI [II.v-vi] there is what amounts to an interlude. The battle rages on and off the stage for a while, and then King Henry enters, alone. His long soliloquy comments on the ebb and flow of battle, and tells us that he has been sent to wait out of harm's way. He goes on to discuss a variety of other things on his mind. Then a son enters and discovers that the man he has slain and carried from the field is his father, and a

father enters to make the same discovery about a son. The three speak at length, in separate soliloquies that achieve a choric nature, and the father and son exit. Then after excursions, three of Henry's force enter in retreat, and they all flee together.

In Julius Caesar [V.iii-v] the battle early turns against the Cassius-Brutus force. Cassius and Titinius enter in retreat. Pindarus, who enters a few lines later, is sent to watch the battle from a nearby hill, and Titinius leaves to ride close to the battle and bring back report. Pindarus shortly enters above where he watches the battle and reports to the lower-stage Cassius. Cassius calls him down, and he re-enters on the lower stage to help Cassius commit suicide. Titinius returns, and kills himself. Brutus and his force enter for a brief rest before renewing the fight, and discover the bodies. They exit to the battle again, and re-enter in retreat to rest. Brutus goes back to the fight again, and several enemy soldiers enter and fight with his followers. When the stage is again empty, Brutus and his men enter again in retreat, and rest on a rock. Brutus commits suicide, and the others flee.

### Conclusion

The conventions of resters, retreaters, waiters, and

watchers, perhaps more than any of the preceding conventions, suggest that most playwrights conceived battle scenes to be realistic in structure as well as in physical appearance. Characters do not artificially stop in the midst of fighting to speak to each other or to convey things to the audience, but come away from the fighting to rest before they talk. The reasons for entrances are always "real" ones, and relate to the context of battle. Even in the unique and lengthy interlude in III Henry VI, the king does not speak his soliloquy in the midst of the fighting, but carefully establishes that he has been sent from the battle. Some of the situations may be a bit far-fetched--it is difficult to imagine a real-life situation in which a man sits in a chair and watches a battle--but even in such cases it is a straining at reality, not an attempt at symbolic presentation: the man in the chair is presented to us as sick, and thus has a "real" basis for his presence. Even in the few cases in which Chorus-like narrators appear--and they are rare--the conventions around them are realistically grounded, and the chorus acts as abridger more than as depicter of battle. This reality of structure is as common in the very early plays as in the late ones.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE BATTLE ENDS

Horestes includes the only field battle in this study that takes place entirely on the stage. It ends with the flight of one group of soldiers and the capture of its leader  $[D_1^V - D_2^F]$ . In other plays the main part of the battle is fought off-stage, and although many include an on-stage duel or clash as the definitive, battle-winning fight, the playwright had to establish in some way that the entire battle was finished.

#### Single Combat

One means for combining a definitive fight and the end of the fray was to end the battle with single combat between two champions. Such scenes usually begin with two armies, or large segments of them, meeting on the stage while hostilities are halted for the combat. In I Iron Age

Both the Armies make ready to ioyne battaile,  
but Hector steps betwixt them holding vp his Lance.  
[296]

In Golden Age, two armies enter and make a stand, and one leader proposes single combat [50]. In the early Edmond

Ironside two armies make a stand, and after some speeches

The Armies make towards one an other when  
Edricus standinge betwene sayeth [1860-1]

that single combat would be accepted. Similar development occurs in Sophonisba [53-7], and in Valiant Welshman [E<sub>2</sub><sup>V</sup>]. In all these cases the battle has been raging off-stage for some time.<sup>1</sup>

In I Iron Age--the context is the Trojan War--the armies leave the stage to prepare for combat, and then return to watch. In the other plays the armies stay on. In all cases the armies seem to align themselves opposite each other, and the combat is fought between them: in I Iron Age "the two Champions . . . appeare betwixt the two armies" [299]; in Golden Age a leader says "Two royall armies then on both sides stand" [50]; and in Valiant Welshman a leader says to the already aligned armies "Then as we are, Souldiers, begirt us round, / And let no man disturb the Combatants." [E<sub>3</sub><sup>R</sup>]

Such staging raises real sight problems on an Elizabethan stage. With one army opposite the other, no matter if

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<sup>1</sup>Similar staging occurs in Four Prentices [201], in which there is no fighting before the combat, and in Lust's Dominion [E<sub>9</sub><sup>V</sup>-E<sub>10</sub><sup>R</sup>] in which single combat is called for but in which the losing side renews the fighting when their leader falls.

one were against the tiring house wall or if both were at right angles to it, a great part of the audience--groundlings and those in the first tier--would have difficulty seeing the combat. And yet the combat itself would be the climax to the battle activity, and would hold great interest. In none of the sequences is there any dialogue during the fighting to help the blocked members of the audience, and we would suspect that even such a device would be hardly satisfactory. In Sophonisba (written for the Blackfriars at which groundlings at the sides of the stage may not have been a problem) a stage direction calls for one leader to lead "his traine up to the mount" [53]. This may mean that they aligned themselves along the tiring house wall--the place where the mount, or platform for the chair of state, was likely to be. This would require the opposing force to align themselves along the audience side of the stage.

One possible reason for such staging is suggested by common modern practice: in order to add confusion and to cover the faked killing at the end of a duel, producers often intentionally cover such scenes from view and block the actual killing with masses of men. However, the stage directions do not easily lend themselves to such an interpretation. They are often lengthy and quite explicit as to the weapons, the movements, and even the breathing of the combatants--

they all look as though the playwrights intended for the combats to be closely scrutinized.<sup>2</sup> Unless the opposing armies were very closely bunched in the ranks it would have been possible to see the fighting as it flashed between legs and bodies, and such an effect may have been considered desirable. But Iron Age was, the author's preface informs us, performed by two companies at once--if all the available actors were on the stage at once (and there are few points in the play that call for it more) there may not have been much room between them. Only six plays--three of which are by Heywood--include combats with armies on-stage, which may testify to the difficulties mentioned here. And it may be that in spite of authorial intention--only Edmond Ironside exists in a prompt-source text--the soldiers "faked" the staging, and moved out of the way against the tiring house wall.

#### Other On-Stage Endings

Only one other battle--on board a ship at sea--comes

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<sup>2</sup>Rape of Lucrece [252]: "Alarum, a fierce fight with sword and target, then after pause and breathe . . . fight with single swords, and being deadly wounded and painting for breth, making a stroak at each together with their gantlets they fall;" Sophonisba [57]: "Massinissa & Syphax combate, Syphax failes Massinissa unclasps Syphax caske & as reddy to kil him speakes Syphax;" Golden Age [51]: "They combat with lauelings first, after with swords and targets."

to an end in sight of the audience. In Christian Turned Turk, as the battle rages out of sight, the hero and a friend enter to rest. The enemy bursts on to the stage, and the effect is that the rest of the battle has finished off-stage, that the enemy has swept away all of the opposition except the hero and friend, and with their capture takes over the ship [198]. Such an effect is especially suited to the Elizabethan stage, once it has been established as a segment of a ship, and it is less surprising to discover that field battles were not staged in such a way than to discover that other shipboard battles were not.

### Off-Stage Endings

The great majority of battles end off-stage. In only a tiny handful do playwrights use a strictly conventional means to inform us of the ending. In Alphonsus of Aragon [722] and in Edmond Ironside [966] Chorus-like characters enter and tell us how the battles have ended. In Weakest Goeth to the Wall [1-9] a chorus describes the dumb-show battle that precedes his entrance, and in John of Bordeaux a man who has been shown a battle in a dream awakes and describes his vision to others on the stage.

In other scenes, and there are over 140 of them, the outcome is conveyed to us by participants, watchers, and sound effects.

The most common method is for participants to enter on to a momentarily empty stage as though coming from the fray, and to establish with dialogue that the battle is finished. In a few cases it is members of the losing side. In III Henry VI [I.iii] it is one defeated leader; in I Antonio and Mellida [183] it is one survivor of a sea battle; in Lochrine [2064] it is a man and woman who enter "in a maze" with the words "O faire Estrilda we haue lost the field;" in II Tamburlaine [105] it is a man, wife, and child fleeing a captured city; in Cymbeline [V.ii] it is a small group of retreaters; in II Henry VI [V.iii] it is a small group of retreaters followed by another; in Battle of Alcazar [1369-1505] it is a whole procession of small groups of retreaters; in Julius Caesar [V.v] it is a whole contingent in flight; and in I Henry VI [I.ii] it is the whole French force that has previously exited to battle. In True Tragedy of Richard III [2002] one minor character from the losing side enters with "Report" and describes the entire battle, including the ending. In Four Prentices [234] a large contingent of the losing army enters as though in a safe location and establishes that they have lost at least the first phase of a war.

In most cases it is the winners that appear. In Valiant

Welshman [D<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>] it is a single leader.<sup>3</sup> In Edmond Ironside [1594] two leaders enter, one thanking the other for his assistance in winning the battle. In II Robin Hood three men enter:

Enter olde Bruse wounded, led by his sonne  
and Lester.

Br. Is the field ours?

Young B. I, thanks to noble Lester. [G<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>]

In I Edward IV it is five men:

. . . enter Maïor, Recorder, Shore, Josselin,  
and a Messenger talking with the Maïor.

Maïor. I, my good friend, so certify his Grace,  
The rebels are dispersed all and fled,  
And now his Highnesse meetes with victory. [31]

Similar small groups--three or more enumerated characters unaccompanied by "soldiers" or "others"--establish the end of field battles in II Henry IV [IV.111] and Valiant Welshman. [I<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>]

### Army Entrances

Usually, large, army-like groups enter and establish in a variety of ways that the battle is finished. Sometimes

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<sup>3</sup>Two ambiguous directions in David and Bethsabe call for but one person to enter, and lines are given to only that person. The first calls for an army to assault a tower and "they win the Tower, and Ioab speakes aboue." It can only be assumed that some of the "they" that win the tower appear with him [222-4]. Later in the play a winning leader enters with a captured crown [851-3]. In both cases the text is too incomplete and perhaps corrupt for us to know how many were intended to appear--if, indeed, any at all were intended to appear in what may be only a closet drama.

the stage direction calls for no more than leaders and an army.<sup>4</sup> In III Henry VI [V.v] the King's opening words are "Now here a period of tumultuous Broyles;" in Famous Victories [F<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>] the leaders enter discussing the number of dead, and their speeches establish the end of the battle and identify the entering group as the winners.

Sometimes captive opponent leaders are brought on and signify by their presence the defeat of their side. In Travels of the Three English Brothers [B<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>] and in Selimus [1200 & 2391-3], at least one prisoner appears. In Old-castle there are three [1640-1], and in Blind Beggar of Alexandria, four [1428-9]. In Lovesick King the context and the stage direction appear to call for two victorious contingents to enter--perhaps at separate entrances--with prisoners. Canutus, Osrick, and others are on the stage:

Alarm. Enter Thornton, Randolph, and the Colliers, they fight and take Canutus prisoner, and drive out the rest . . . Enter [K. Scots] Alured, Donald, Malcolme, Edmond, Thornton, with prisoners, Grim, and the Colliers, leading Canutus, and Osrick.

[G<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>]

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<sup>4</sup>Massacre at Paris, 952; Shoemaker a Gentleman, B<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>; Four Prentices, 247; II Henry VI, IV.ii; Richard III, V.v; Macbeth, V.vii; II Iron Age, 394; Bonduca, 1699; etc. It seems reasonable to assume that if one force has been identified as an army before the battle, and substantially the same group, with "soldiers" or "others" enters at the end of the battle, the playwright wanted the entrance to signify the same army.



Ensigns are carried on in victorious entrances in Edward III [ $I_2^V$  &  $F_3^V$ ], Four Prentices [235], I Henry VI [I.v], and Shoemaker a Gentleman [ $G_1^V$ ]. Significant as Ensigns were as symbols in battle, the appearance of captured ensigns would have added vivid emphasis to victorious entrances.

### "Triumphs" and "Victories"

In III Henry VI a victorious army enters with the stage direction:

Flourish. Enter King Edward in triumph, with Richard, Clarence, and the rest. [V.iii]

A triumph, which the OED defines in the context of Roman History, was the entrance of a victorious commander with his army and spoils in solemn procession. Such post-victory parades into London occurred occasionally during the latter part of the sixteenth century, and were reflected in plays of the period in scenes in which much degrading display was made of noble prisoners.<sup>5</sup> The most famous of such sequences is the "Pampered Jades of Asia" entrance in II Tamburlaine [120]. Its purpose is not, however, to establish the end of a battle, or to establish that Tamburlaine has achieved a particular victory.

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<sup>5</sup>Venezky, 45-51.

Triumph, when it appears at the end of battles, may have included some of the characteristics of the formal city-entry. In Wounds of Civil War there are several extended stage directions for triumphs:

Enter Scilla in triumph in his chare triumphant of gold, drawn by foure Moores, before the chariot: his colours, his crest, his captaines, his prisoners: Arcathius Mithridates son, Aristion, Archelaus, bearing crownes of gold, and manacled. After the chariot, his souldiers bands, Basillus, Lucretius, Lucullus: besides prisoners of diuers Nations, and sundry disguises. [1070-76]

Although this is not immediately after a battle, in two other places Lodge calls for triumphant entries after a battle:

Enter Scilla triumphant, Lucretius, Pompey, with souldiers. [374]

At last enter Scilla triumphant with Pompey, Metellus, Citizens, souldiers. [1933-35]

In the latter scene there is a long speech in which the victorious leader chastises the losers. It seems likely to assume that Lodge intended triumph and triumphant to be similarly interpreted, and that some of the pomp associated with the non-theatrical meaning of the term would have been reflected in the entrance of the armies.

Marston, in I Antonio and Mellida, presents a post-battle sequence that seems to call for a somewhat formal entry and development. There is an off-stage sea battle, after which one survivor of the losing side enters as though

cast on the shore. Then the victors enter:

The Cornets sound a Synnet: Enter Feliche and Alberto, Castilio and Forobosco, a Page carrying a shield: Piero in Armour: Catzo and Dildo and Balurdo: All these (sailing Piero) armed with Petronels: Being entred, they make a stand in diuided foyles.

After discussion and exultation over the victory, characters enter on the upper stage, and shortly:

. . . the Cornets sound a florish, and a peale of shot is giuen.  
Mell. The triumph's ended. [219-343]

This scene, too, is not an entrance of an army in the field, but it does portray a victorious army immediately after a battle in what appears to be a rather formal presentation of a triumph.

In Edward III, the first notice of victory and the end of battle occurs in the stage direction:

Enter Prince Edward in tryumph, bearing in his hande his shiuered Launce, and the King of Boheme, borne before, Wrapt in the Coullours. [F<sub>3</sub><sup>V</sup>]

In Hector of Germany, victory is established with:

A Flourish, enter in triumph, Bastard, Saxon, Trier, Mentz, leading the king of Bohemia, Brandenburg, and Sauoy, Prisoners. [A<sub>4</sub><sup>V</sup>]

"Borne before" in the first, and "Prisoners" in the second, suggest a relationship between these stage directions and more extended formal triumphs.

None of these texts, except III Henry VI, show evidence of more than authorial stage directions. The only decidedly

theatrical text in which triumph occurs (in the context of a victorious entrance of an army in the field) is in the confused and puzzling Edmond Ironside. The final version of the stage direction is "Edmond returnes in tryumph to the ffeild" [1014].<sup>6</sup> No prisoners or any hint at formal entry is given in the ensuing dialogue. The same is true in III Henry VI. It is difficult, then, to assess triumph in the context of field entries.

The term victory appears to bear some relationship to triumph. In Woodstock, for instance, the conclusion of a battle is heralded with:

sound a Retreat / Then A Florish  
Enter w<sup>th</sup> Victory Lancaster [yorke] Chaeney  
Arondell Surry, & souldiers w<sup>th</sup> lapoole Bushy  
& Scrope Prisoners. [2956-57]

In I Fair Maid of the West, a shipboard battle ends with:

Enter with victory Besse, Roughman, Forset,  
Clem, &c. The Spaniards Prisoners. [317]

In Stukely it is "Enter Muly hamet with victorie," and the entrants talk about the number of dead and captured [L<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>].

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<sup>6</sup>The manuscript reads "Edmond returnes in tryumph [on] [in] to the [stage] ffeild." The scribe wrote "on the stage," but another hand deleted on and stage, and above on interlined in (which was then deleted in favor of to) and added ffeild at the end. See note, Malone Society edition, p. 49. The scribe appears to have been preparing the text for the stage, and although we may wonder why the change was made, the original version is clearly theatrical.

In Golden Age there is a victory after an on-stage single combat:

. . . Jupiter kills Enceladus, and enters with victory. Jupiter, Saturne, Sibilla, Iuno, Melisseus, Archas, with the Lords of Creet. [51]

There seems to be little reason for the exit and immediate re-entrance except for its possible processional value.<sup>7</sup>

It is difficult not to see the two terms as almost interchangeable--they do not both appear in the stage directions of any one play, and the presence of prisoners as well as identical contexts, suggests similarity. Further evidence is found in that victory appears almost exclusively in Red Bull plays, or in plays by the Red Bull-associated Heywood<sup>8</sup>--such close connection suggests that it was a term indigenous to one group.

On the other hand the connection between the two terms is not entirely conclusive. There is no record in OED that victory has ever been thought of as a procession or act denoting conquest. As it appears in stage directions, it is

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<sup>7</sup>Cf. Reynolds, Red Bull, 129, for a similar inference about an almost identical exit and re-entrance--without the term Victory--in Four Prentices.

<sup>8</sup>Travels of the Three English Brothers [D<sub>4</sub>V]; Shoemaker a Gentleman [G<sub>1</sub>V]; I Fair Maid of the West [317]; Golden Age [51]; Silver Age [142]; Brazen Age [224]; and Stukely [L<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>]. The above cited Woodstock is of doubtful association.

always "with victory," never "in victory." This may, of course, be merely a question of idiomatic usage, but it is also true that there are no extended descriptions of victories as there are of triumphs and therefore no hard evidence, except for context and the few similarities that the two were the same. In addition, victory appears in two places as a sound effect denoting a won battle, and once as a shout of exultation at the end of a battle: in Leir

Alarums and excursions, then sound victory.  
Enter Leir, Perillus, King, Cordella, and Mumford;  
[2631-2]

and in Troublesome Reien

. . . Sound victorie.  
Enter Iohn, [and others].  
Iohn. Thus right triumphs . . . [E<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>]

In Larum for London, the terms appear in close conjunction (although only one is in a stage direction):

After a triumphant shout within, enter Alua,  
Danila, Romero, Verdugo, Van End, with their  
Rapiers drawne, crying.  
All. Victorie, victorie, Antwerpe and victorie.  
[799-802]

These instances might lead us to assume that an entrance "with victory" was an entrance either preceded by or accompanied by special sound effects. However, the likelihood is lessened by the existence of other sound effects in the Woodstock entrance (a retreat and a Florish) and in Shoemaker

a Gentleman (a retreat) that seem to function as sounds which, per se denote victory just before the entrance.<sup>9</sup>

The only conclusion it seems safe to make is that the terms were intended to call for some form of action that would denote a victory. There may have been some formality intended in triumphs and even perhaps in victories, or there may have been, especially in the latter, the opposite intention--some form of exultation and weapon brandishing.

In Wounds of Civil War there is "enter in royaltie Lucretius" [2119]. Lodge uses "triumph" in other parts of the play, and this stage direction may have been as much intended to show that Lucretius had gained the crown as to show victory, per se. The entrance does, however, signify both the end of the battle and the victory for one side.

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<sup>9</sup>In Two Noble Kinsmen, a battle concludes with "Then enter Theseus (victor) . . ." [3H<sub>3</sub>V, 2nd. ser.]. The unusual form of this stage direction, appearing as it does in a late-published (1634) text, may not relate too closely to the author or the playhouse.

One other stage direction adds to the difficulty of defining the term. In Travels there is:

Alarum, Enter Robert, and other Persians with victories.  
[D<sub>4</sub>V]

The form of the word makes it appear to be a noun, and suggests that the entrance was intended to include a display of spoils. The context adds to the likelihood: the group appears not from an immediately off-stage battle, but from a distant war. Although they are not depicted as entering a city, the context is more like a Triumph than the other post-battle victories.

The already oft-cited parallel stage directions in III Henry VI [V.iv-v] and True Tragedy [H<sub>1</sub><sup>F</sup>] can be brought into the discussion here.<sup>10</sup> The Folio text clears the stage before the flourish and the ensuing victorious entrance. The impression is that Shakespeare was calling for a somewhat formal triumph, with the stage cleared after the battle, a flourish, and then an entrance with prisoners. The actors' version, which keeps the small group of captors and captured on the stage as the rest of the victorious army enters, appears to alter his concept to a more bustling spectacle with an emphasis on the on-stage capture at the expense of the more formal victory entrance.

#### Sound Effects as Concluding Signals

In a few cases sound effects are used to designate a victory, or at least the cessation of battle. Already mentioned has been the sounding of victory: in each such case, however, characters or groups enter immediately and establish with dialogue that the battle is over. This is, in fact, the general pattern: the off-stage sound effect (usually a retreat) is identified as a sign of victory by either on-stage characters or by characters that immediately

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<sup>10</sup>See above, p. 317 for the directions and their likely meaning.



enter. In I Henry IV "A retraite is sounded," and an on-stage character says "The Trumpet sounds retrait, the day is our[s]" [V.iv]. In Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida each off-stage army sounds a retreat on a trumpet, and the sounds are heard and interpreted by members of an on-stage group [V.vii]. In Sophonisba there is "A shoute; the Cornets give a florish," which is wrongly interpreted as a victory for their side by an on-stage group [28]. In Lust's Dominion, an on-stage character tells others that the battle is about to end, and then identifies the ensuing retreat as the conclusion [ $E_{10}^F$ ]. In Valiant Welshman a retreat is followed by the entrance of one man who tells us that it signified the close of battle [ $D_3^V$ ], and in II Iron Age, a retreat is followed by two men who establish that the battle is over [362]. Many of the entrances in which a victorious (or occasionally losing) army enters at the end of the battle, are preceded by retreats, but in most cases the dialogue informs us that the battle has concluded.

In only a very few cases does a sound effect seem, in itself, to establish the end. In King John there is a retreat after which an army enters, but the dialogue does not mention that they have won or that the battle is finished. They instead go right into the disposition of prisoners. The sequence immediately preceding the sound effect, however,

establishes that victory is imminent [III.ii-iii]. A rather confusing stage direction in I Iron Age appears to develop in much the same way. It reads:

. . . retreate sounded. Enter Agamemnon, Ajax, Vlysses, &c., all the other but Paris. [327]<sup>11</sup>

No mention is made of the battle that has been raging up to this moment, and it would appear that Heywood, if the text can be depended upon, intended the retreat to signify the close of battle. The only really clear-cut example is in Coriolanus. After the battle has raged for some time there is "Flourish. Alarum. A retreat is sounded." The victorious army enters--a group from one door, and one man from another--and they discuss the battle in retrospect [I.ix]. There is no direct statement made that the battle is finished or that they have won. The implication of the dialogue is, of course, quite strong.

In a few cases Flourish stands alone as the effect that accompanies or precedes a victorious entrance.<sup>12</sup> More often it is in conjunction with other sound effects, as in

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<sup>11</sup>Paris, however, is the second to speak. Later in the scene there is an entrance cue for "Agamemnon, Achilles, Diomed, Menelaus, and Paris, &c.," all of whom seem to be on the stage at the moment the cue appears. [329].

<sup>12</sup>Shoemaker a Gentleman, B<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>; III Henry VI, V.v; Larum for London, 1608; Hector of Germany, A<sub>4</sub><sup>v</sup>.

the above-cited Coriolanus. In I Henry VI it is "Alarum Retreat, Flourish" [I.v]; in Fortune by Land and Sea it is "Alarum and Flourish" [418]; in Richard III it is "Retreat, and Flourish" [V.v]; in Two Noble Kinsmen it is "a Retreat: Florish" [3H<sub>3</sub><sup>v</sup>, 2nd. ser.]; in Double Marriage it is "Flo. Trumpets. / Retreat" [2P<sub>2</sub><sup>v</sup>]; in Macbeth it is "Retreat and Flourish" [V.vii]; in Lovesick King it is "A Florish and a retreat sounded" [G<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>]; and in Woodstock it is "sound a retreat Then a Florish" [2956-57]. It also appears by itself in a rather complicated post-battle display in I Jeronimo: after a leader is defeated on the stage--which action appears to signify the end of the battle--there is a funeral procession for a dead leader, after which there is a florish followed by the entrance of a victorious army. [333-36]

It would be nice to find a pattern in all this. Although "flourish and retreat" appears less often than "retreat and flourish," neither form substantially dominates. Flourish, associated as it sometimes was with royalty, might have occasionally been intended to announce the entrance of a king or ruler in the procession to follow; but in several cases--Coriolanus and Shoemaker--only military leaders enter at the heads of forces. It was an ornate musical figure, and might lead us to assume that its use was part of an

elaborate, somewhat formal, triumph-like (in its Roman sense) entrance. But it appears as a signal that precedes the entrance of only one or two characters--Sophonisba--and only rarely occurs in stage directions in which triumph appears. Both terms are often used in the midst of battles when there is no question but that they refer only to momentary turns in the fray or to other general effects of battle.

No sound effect, in fact, seems to have existed only as a sign of victory or cessation of battle--excepting the ambiguous and unique "sound victory" in Leir. At the same time, sound cues occur in almost half of the entrances that establish victory. Keeping in mind the general laxity and ambiguity in many authorial stage directions, it seems likely that most such entrances were preceded or accompanied with a sound of some sort. One substantially different from the other sounds of battle and not imitative of battle noises or normally connected with military parlance would have been desirable.

It is possible that in some cases, the cessation of sound was used to signify the end of fighting. In Alphonsus of Germany, while an off-stage battle rages, a group waits on the stage. Although there is no sound cue of any kind, one character says "But hark the heat of battail hath an

end," and shortly afterward a messenger brings word of the outcome [ $I_3^V$ ]. No other text hints at such staging, however, and inasmuch as several battles exist in which off-stage sounds momentarily cease only to renew, such a technique would not, in itself, be entirely satisfactory without an on-stage interpreter. Further, in scenes in which only a few on-stage actors are used to play a sequence, we can assume that the rest of the players were in the tiring house making the sounds of battle. It would have been difficult for them to hear (over their own din) the lines spoken on the stage and to know when to stop. The entrance of the man or men who carry the word of the battle's conclusion could have served, as they passed through the tiring-house door, as a cue to the noisemakers, but such an occasion would call for sounds of victory rather than silence. Normally the pattern was for the sounds of pre-battle activity to blend into the sounds of battle and for the sounds of battle to continue throughout the fray. It is likely that the sounds of battle blended into the victorious shouts, retreats, and flourishes.

#### Other Battle Endings

Although the victorious entrance of a group on to an empty stage was the most common method for establishing the

end of a battle, playwrights used several others. Sometimes word is brought to people waiting on the stage. Twice, in Tamburlaine, an army marches on, once to waiting queens [44] and once to a hiding recalcitrant [113]. In Henry V, one representative of the foe comes on to confront an army and inform them that the battle is over [IV.vii], and in Guy of Warwick, the losing King enters and similarly concedes to the victorious army [ $C_4^V$ ]. In II If You Know Not Me word of victory (in a sea battle) is brought to the Queen and her army by two of her leaders who carry on the enemy's ensigns [342].

The simplest approach is in King Lear [V.ii], Soliman and Perseda [ $H_4^F$ ], and Weakest Goeth [1853] in which one man brings word to one waiting man. Shakespeare used this twice for off-stage sea battles in Antony and Cleopatra: once one man enters to another [III.x], and another time one man enters to another, followed almost immediately by a second with further details [IV.xii]. In Valiant Welshman one man brings word to one who has just killed an opponent in a duel [ $B_4^V$ ], and in George a Green one man brings word to one who has just entered with the captured enemy leader [368-71]. Similar examples are in II Robin Hood [ $H_3^V$ ], Alphonsus of Germany [ $I_3^V$ ], If It Be Not Good [337-41], and Edward III. [ $E_1^V$ ]

A few variations occur. In King John a herald enters with word of victory for his side, and then the opposing herald enters with word that his side has won [II.i]. The audience knows by this that the battle is over, at least. Later in the play interest in a raging battle fades as the focus centers on the ailing king, and it is not until several scenes later that a messenger-like character brings word of the outcome [V.ii & vii]. In Sir Thomas Wyatt a group waits on the stage as the sounds of battle get closer: several messengers enter with news of the enemy's decline, and finally the losing leader himself enters and concedes that all is lost. [443]

#### Combinations and Unusual Endings

In some plays, several methods are used in such close conjunction that they seem calculated to make a single effect. In III Henry VI, for instance, three retreaters enter to a waiting king and tell him that all is lost: then a wounded retreater enters and falls, a retreat is heard, and the winning army enters and speaks of their victory [II.iv.-vi].<sup>13</sup> In Stukely, a leader is on the stage: a messenger enters with word that the battle is lost and they

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<sup>13</sup>Cf. also Locrine, 775-932; Selimus, 2463-79; II Tamburlaine, 91; I Henry VI, III.1.

both flee. Then a retreating leader enters, and is captured by several of the enemy. They all stay on, however, while a Chorus enters, sums up the battle, and tells us what is to follow. Then the captured leader is taken off and the victorious army enters [ $L_3^F$ ]. In Alphonsus of Aragon a battle begins in action and sound, and a Chorus enters and tells us how the battle will come to an end. Then the ending--a capture--is played on the stage. [1655-80]

Several endings are unique, or include unique details. The Cade insurrection in II Henry VI ends with two representatives of the government talking the rebels into disbanding [IV.viii]. In Coriolanus, the conquest of a city is illustrated by the entrance of soldiers carrying loot [I.v]. In Rape of Lucrece, a battle culminates in Horatio's defence of the bridge, and when the bridge falls the battle is necessarily over [242-44]. Later in the same play a battle ends with the entrance of the losing army, the leader of which concedes defeat to an opponent on the stage [252]. The assault on Harfleur in Henry V fizzles away--we see the soldiers exit to the attack, and then we see a group of captains awaiting the outcome of what appears to be a stalemate [III.ii]: nothing in the text tells us when the off-stage battle activity is to cease. The same sort of ending occurs



in Birth of Merlin: we see the battle raging and then, after several sequences about other matters, we learn that the battle has turned into a siege [ $F_4^v$ ]. In Golden Age, a group of soldiers enter and establish that their side has lost, but that a patch of fighting still continues in a corner of the field where one of their comrades is hemmed in. The scene shifts to the fighting, and ends with a truce. [74]

To sum up, battle endings appear--with but a few ambiguous exceptions--to rely on dialogue. Even when there are dramatic entrances of victorious armies, dialogue is present to directly inform the audience that the battle is over, and to identify the winner. They are invariably presented in a realistic context: armies enter as though from the battle, messengers and retreaters enter with word to "waiters," losers enter wounded and dying; and all the trappings and circumstances of full-scale, but out-of-sight battle, are depicted through the endings. In almost all cases post-battle dialogue is careful to explain the endings, and to clarify ambiguities that appear during the battle scenes themselves.<sup>14</sup> Such dialogue, even when Chorus-like characters enter after a fray, almost always sustains the

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<sup>14</sup>See Clemen, English Tragedy Before Shakespeare, 211-286, for a discussion of the many post-battle laments for the dead in early plays.

feeling that real battle has been in progress: dead are enumerated, wounds are discussed, battered weapons and frayed ensigns are carried on and discussed, and the general context is that of immediate and exultant victory.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CONCLUSIONS

#### Structure

The basic conventions of stage battles have been examined. The permutations were almost infinite. No playwright used all of them in every battle, and few battles are alike in specific detail and development. They range from the brevity of the off-stage battle in King Lear to the almost bedroom-farce complexity of the 'edge of the fray' activity in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida, and to the large-scale on-stage clashes in Heywood's Ages plays. Yet the over-all picture shows a basic similarity in concept. With very few exceptions, playwrights throughout the entire period chose to present battles in as realistic a context as was possible, and to use all the realistic trappings that the theatre could muster in order to sustain the effect.

Some few battles begin with the on-stage clash of forces, but they invariably move off-stage to continue out of sight. In most cases they begin off-stage and continue

there while the stage is used to transmit the development and occasional highlights. Realistic sound effects sustain the illusion of off-stage battle, and characters enter to fight, plot, retreat, rest, wait, die, and eventually to establish the end of fighting, but always as though coming from the midst of the battle to a place away. The battles are always presented chronologically, from brave pre-battle speeches, to noisy clashes, through shifts in the tide of battle, to the concluding moments. When artificial conventions such as choruses are used--and they are rare--their purpose is to save time by skipping ahead from one event to another, but always with chronology in view. And the events that are presented in such sequences are as realistically depicted as in other sequences.

Such a use of the stage for the edge, outskirts, or sidelines of the battlefield enabled playwrights to present, not symbolic frays with a few symbolic on-stage performers, but full-scale battles in full heat. With the tiring house wall between the audience and the main part of the battle, the war could be developed in the imaginations of the audience. Fighting men often enter in groups, but once the battle has been established as taking place off-stage, the entering participants would be seen, not as symbolic cyphers, but as individuals excerpted from the battle.

Off-stage action of any kind, depending as it does on the imagination of the audience, tends to be imagined as real, and many playwrights took advantage of this to present very realistic effects. One example will suffice here. In Edward III word is brought to on-stage characters that the Prince is surrounded by the enemy and in need of rescue. His father refuses to send help, saying that the boy will achieve greater honor if he achieves it alone. Then the Prince enters with a shivered lance and with the body of a dead opponent borne before him [ $F_3^V$ ]. It would be virtually impossible for us to conceive of such off-stage activity--no matter how the actors comported themselves on-stage--as formal. Dr. Harbage was correct in his statement that the battles themselves do not come on to the stage,<sup>1</sup> but his conclusion that this indicates a formality of presentation is not in accordance with the scenes as they were developed by the playwrights. The battles were kept off-stage in order to increase the effect of reality, and to prevent any feeling of artificiality or formality.

Dr. Harbage elsewhere noted that the techniques of the pre-1608 period would have permitted the staging of battles at the Private theatres, but that such scenes were rare.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Theatre for Shakespeare, 51.

<sup>2</sup>Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, 260.

Although this may reflect audience taste, it should be noted that Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida is thought by many to have been written for a select audience of the type that frequented the private theatres, and it includes one of the lengthiest and most complex battle scenes in the period. Rather, it quite probably reflects the very real fact that no matter how skillful the boys were, they could not have portrayed soldiers en masse without looking ludicrous, and an off-stage battle would have sounded more like a school-ground than a raging battle-field.

### Action

Not only was the structure of battle scenes realistic, but so was the action and physical appearance. The many authorial stage directions for particular physical action, make-up, properties, and sound effects of a realistic nature, reflect a theatrical milieu in which stage battles looked and sounded as real as possible. It is especially in this light that one widespread critical discussion of the past several decades is brought into focus.

There have been, in the last century, at least three schools of thought about the Elizabethan stage. One, represented primarily by scores of nineteenth century critics, saw the theatre as a primitive, rather inept, and make-shift

thing in which Banquo crossed the stage astride a hobby-horse, and in which one drummer, without leaving the stage, shuttled back and forth to accompany five different armies as they entered, crossed, and exited into a town in III Henry VI. Such an attitude, perhaps based in a condescending attitude toward an early and "backward" people, and perhaps influenced by the primitive quality of early wood-cuts and drawings, does not have any basis in what we can infer from the content of the plays. Elizabethan audiences, if we can assume that they were able to understand the plays of Shakespeare at all, must have had the mental equipment of adults, and would have been as amused and annoyed by such makeshift and ludicrous staging as would any modern audience. It is one thing to ask an audience to imagine a forest; it is another thing to present them with clumsy artifices that would make them laugh. Serious plays are hard enough to manage on a stage: as Sir Barry Jackson wrote:

The line between the risible and the serious is of such infinitesimal breadth that the reaction of the audience can never be foretold.<sup>3</sup>

Directors do not go out of their way to induce laughter at serious moments. Such critical attitudes toward Elizabethan staging do not seem to exist any longer.

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<sup>3</sup>"On Producing Henry VI," 52.

The second and third schools of thought are the two sides of a current question about Elizabethan acting. One school, using terms such as "formal," "artificial," "conventional," "stylized," and "symbolic" has as a foundation the attitude of the important and influential scholars Muriel Bradbrook<sup>4</sup> and Alfred Harbage,<sup>5</sup> and came to a peak with the work of Bertram Joseph in the first edition of his book Elizabethan Acting. They see the action on the Elizabethan stage as one in which there was little attempt at realism, but which was rather the presentation of artificial and stylized conventional action that symbolized rather than represented the actions of real life.

Joseph's book stimulated a series of arguments and rebuttals from members of the third school, a group that tends to see the Elizabethan stage as influenced by an increasing realism in subject matter.<sup>6</sup> They feel that the

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<sup>4</sup>Esp. Themes and Conventions.

<sup>5</sup>Esp. "Elizabethan Acting," and Theatre for Shakespeare. See also F. P. Wilson, "Elizabethan Theatre;" and A. M. Nagler, Shakespeare's Stage.

<sup>6</sup>J. R. Brown, "On the Acting of Shakespeare's Plays;" R. A. Foakes, "The Player's Passion, Some Notes on Elizabethan Psychology and Acting;" Marvin Rosenberg, "Elizabethan Actors: Men or Marionettes?"; David Klein, "Elizabethan Acting;" C. J. Sisson, "Review of Harbage's Theatre for Shakespeare."



Formalists' arguments are too tenuous, and they present a great amount of internal and external evidence to show that realistic acting and depiction was common and normal. They further suggest that the Formalists are too classically oriented and fastidious to be comfortable with the idea of an uncontrolled rough and tumble amidst the poetry. Joseph himself has joined the Realists, and has come to the conclusion that Elizabethan acting was lifelike.<sup>7</sup>

Critics have found several middle roads between the two latter camps. G. F. Reynolds wrote that the effects of the Elizabethan theatre were realistic, but that they were merely superficial adornments of a not-realistic theatre.<sup>8</sup> Bernard Beckerman developed a theory of what he called "Romantic" acting: a kind of middle ground between formal and naturalistic acting.<sup>9</sup> As he develops his theory, however, it becomes apparent that he conceives Elizabethan acting to be rather like modern "stock-company" acting:

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<sup>7</sup>"Elizabethan Stage and the Art of Elizabethan Drama," 148-50, *et passim*; and especially the extensively revised second edition of Elizabethan Acting (1964).

<sup>8</sup>Red Bull, 192. Although not really a part of the controversy, T. S. Eliot, in Elizabethan Essays [12, 17] had earlier written that the theatre was basically realistic, but was weakened because the effects used were unrealistic.

<sup>9</sup>Shakespeare at the Globe, 109-56.

naturalistic in intent, but relying on stereotyped mannerisms to substitute for intensive character study that limited rehearsal time does not allow. In the final analysis, Beckerman places himself in the third school, perhaps without realizing it. His actors intend, at least, reality.

The stage battle was part acting vehicle, part effect, and part of the whole. Wedded as the three were, it is difficult to conceive that the acting would have been artificial and formal, coming as it did as an integral part of a realistic context transmitted with the help of realistic stage effects. It is almost too much to assume that an actor would engage in a duel using all the skill for which Elizabethan actors were noted, and then read his lines and gesture in an artificial and formal way. Such activity would well overstep the "line between the risible and the serious."

A certain amount of formality might, however, be expected. There is, with marching soldiers, always a necessary amount of formality of formation and of movement. Elizabethan battles in real life were, in a sense, formal: they usually began, at least, with a face to face confrontation of opposing forces.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Such formality lasted only during the opening phases of battle. There was much sneaking around flanks, and surprise attacking from the rear, etc. The formality of confrontation broke as the forces met. They were, in fact, no more formal than were the trench-based battles of World War I.

Much of this formality seems to have been included in the depiction of stage battles, but such formality is what might be called a realistic formality: a presentation, realistically, of the formalities of real battles.

### Performance

The long procession of conjectures in this thesis leaves little doubt that almost without exception most of the lengthy battle scenes are, at one point or another, vague and incomplete. Many stage directions fail to call for props that the dialogue shows us are necessary to the scene. Many whole scenes are ambiguous and require a knowledge of preceding events and succeeding dialogue for complete understanding--the battle in Cymbeline is an example. Vagueness is rarely less prevalent in texts of prompt-copy origin, and there are few cases in which prompters' notes seem to have been added to clear up ambiguities. In many of the more complicated battles actors would not have known exactly what to do from a cursory examination of the stage directions or from their own lines; they would have had to read whole sections of the play or to ask someone in authority when in doubt. The latter is more likely to have occurred in large-scale scenes in which supers were added to pad the spectacle. The authority does not seem to be in prompt-copies, nor would the playwright always have been available

to refresh memories during latter parts of a run or during revivals. Rigorous rehearsal,<sup>11</sup> probably under one guiding hand, and prodigious memories would appear to have been a requisite.

### The Progress of the Battle Scene

Contemporary report gives ample evidence that battle scenes were a staple of the theatre well before the 1580's. The many lost plays from the period after 1580 may quite have included such scenes as well. If we accept the extant plays as probably typical, it becomes obvious that there was no strong dividing line, no great change from year to year--many conventions are current throughout the period, and some few plays of the 1580's include sequences much like those in plays from thirty years later. For many plays, the dates of composition are far from conclusive. It is therefore possible to make only tentative and broad generalizations about the chronological development of the genre. But a certain broad general pattern does seem to exist. The early plays, perhaps as close descendants of the heritage of medieval jousts and combats, tended to present all the battle

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<sup>11</sup>One recent critic has cited battle scenes and their complication as a prime example for a postulation of extensive rehearsal: see Ivor Brown, How Shakespeare Spent the Day, 26.

activity on the stage. Even the classically oriented Gorboduc presents a symbolic on-stage representation rather than the more to be expected report of off-stage warfare. As the professional stage gathered strength in the eighties and nineties there was still much on-stage battle activity, and many battles began with the clash of on-stage armies. During this period there were still many complete frays on the stage, but the practice was usually to identify them as battles between contingents or small groups. After the turn of the century few battles begin on the stage, and although there is still much on-stage fighting and bustle there are few all-out clashes of large forces on the stage: battles remain out of sight, and the effects department provided noise, blood, tattered garments, and properties to make things seem lively. There followed a period of sophistication in which various techniques were developed to enlarge upon and make vivid the off-stage fray. Younger playwrights showed an increasing tendency to steer away from battles entirely. Suddenly, in the middle of the second decade of the seventeenth century, battle scenes fade almost entirely away in new plays. From then on, when they occasionally appear they are brief, almost entirely out of sight, tend for the most part to be placed at the beginnings of acts and depicted as just finished or finishing, and are rarely used for their

own spectacular sake. In The Humorous Lieutenant, for instance, the few battles take place without much development, occur entirely out of sight, and manifest themselves only in a few brief scenes involving two or three characters. Their only purpose seems to be to show the varying effects of battle on the Lieutenant's hypochondria.

These are only, at best, very broad generalizations. Simple battles occurred early in the period, and many of the old plays were still on the stage complete with tempestuous battles, in the few years just before the closing of the theatres. But a falling off of real dimensions did occur, and we can wonder why.

Taste, of course, may have had much to do with it. The period of the early on-stage battles was one of war for England. The Armada and a steady procession of European conflicts would have made stories of battle popular, and it is almost probable that after thirty years the saturation point would have been reached. The history of the modern "Western" motion picture does not, however, give us reason to assume that a saturation point is ever reached with a certain audience, and the real love for the military conflict on stage kept some plays, at least in the noisier public theatres, ever popular.

It may be that a reason more related to the artistic

development of the theatre is responsible for the decline among the newer generations of playwrights. In the same way that the battle scene seems to show a certain development as the years passed, the theatre itself shows a decided change in emphasis and content. By the time professional activity came into full growth in London the theatre had already left behind the atmosphere of the morality play and the mystery play, and was involved in plays the subject matter of which were remarkable biographies and chivalresque romance.<sup>12</sup> This in turn began to give way to plays of a more down-to-earth kind, and true to life tragedies, biographies of all kinds, and tales of real life adventure were popular in the eighties and nineties.<sup>13</sup> After the turn of the century the theatre turned more and more to a depiction of reality. Glynne Wickham, who saw the Elizabethan theatre as the culmination of a Medieval tradition, saw the year 1605 as crucial. In that year the first proscenium arch stage appeared at the English court, and began the transition from a theatre of poetry and suggestion to the modern theatre of pictorial realism and prose.<sup>14</sup> Other

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<sup>12</sup>Cf. Harbage, Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions, 61; T. B. Stroup, "Review" of Bevington's 'Mankind' to Marlowe, 107-8.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. Harbage, Rival Traditions, 64-65.

<sup>14</sup>Early English Stages, I, xxvii.

critics have noted the same progression, and have suggested that the Jacobean theatre was, in its reality and closeness to life, a very different kind of theatre.<sup>15</sup>

To say that playwrights attempted to portray real battles and that the actors attempted to present them realistically does not say that they were successful. A decided number of contemporaries had, even from the beginning, cavilled at them. Sidney's strictures in the early eighties may have been representative of the thoughts of many of the more sophisticated members of the audience. Jonson and other playwrights expressed dissatisfaction and ridicule of the convention, and it may be that the Prologue speeches in Henry V, theatrically contrived as they were to turn attention away from the artifice by over-emphasizing it, reflect a dissatisfaction on the part of Shakespeare. "Four or five ragged foils" was probably an exaggeration for effect, but even thirty realistically armed and costumed actors, bolstered by barrages of realistic sound effects,

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<sup>15</sup>W. J. Lawrence, Pre-Restoration Stage Studies, 225-30; W. Clemen, English Tragedy Before Shakespeare, 38; J. R. Brown, "On the Acting of Shakespeare's Plays," 477-84; A. P. Rossiter, English Drama, 152; W. A. Armstrong, The Elizabethan Private Theatres, 13; Clifford Leech, "Shakespeare's Life, Times, and Stage," 144; D. M. Bevington, From 'Mankind' to Marlowe, 112: see also L. Goldstein, "On the Transition from Formal to Naturalistic Acting," for a view similar to Wickham's, but encompassing the entire European scene.



trick properties, stage blood, and all the acting techniques of a brilliant company, could not present anything more than a convention--"a tacit agreement . . . entered into by the playwright and his audience."<sup>16</sup> No matter how furious the stage battle, it must have been at best, as it is today, an awkward, inept, and artificial thing. Ivor Brown has commented that even with modern methods, large casts, and specialists, audiences are not convinced about battles, but are more likely to admire the skill of performance and rehearsal.<sup>17</sup>

As long as romantic artificiality prevailed in subject matter and story, the inept reality of stage battles was probably not a problem. But as the theatre became more realistic in intent, stage battles came more and more to obtrude as out of key with the whole.<sup>18</sup> The awkwardness could not, in an increasingly realistic theatre, be countered by a turn to artificial means--to symbolic and inten-

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<sup>16</sup>A. C. Sprague, Shakespeare and the Audience, 61.

<sup>17</sup>How Shakespeare Spent the Day, 79.

<sup>18</sup>If we see the stage battle as somewhat Medieval in appearance [see above, p. 409], and as part of the Elizabethan rather than Jacobean tradition, it is possible that its fading was also part of the general shift from a life focused on leaders--Rulers, Kings, and Princes--to an increasing dominance of the middle class. Cf. Arnold Hauser, The Social History of Art, II, 144-72.

tionally stylized methods of presentation. We have noted that instead, playwrights moved the battles off the stage and tried every trick at their command to make the battles seem even more real. It is possible, in fact, to view the history of the convention as a progression of experiments and the development of techniques that were used in an attempt to cope with the inherent problems in realistically portraying battles. But the attempts were not good enough. The audience in their increasing sophistication, and the playwrights from the viewpoint of their realistic use of the theatre, came more and more to side with Sidney. The older generation--Shakespeare and Heywood--continued with them for a time and then, like old soldiers and soldier-stories, battles just faded away.

## APPENDIX

### PLAY LIST

The following section is an annotated list of plays that figure prominently in this dissertation. Each play is listed with its probable date of composition (as cited in the Schoenbaum revision of Harbage's Annals of English Drama), its author(s), the company for which it was written, the date of its first publication, and the primary source of the text used for this dissertation. The body of the annotation is a summary of facts and theories about dates, authorships, the acting companies, and the state and provenance of the texts as we have them. Other critical studies, or studies that add nothing new, are not included: such works, when used, are cited in the text and are listed in the List of References. My own comments are added as bracketed notes at the end of each cited theory, or as notes at the end of each listing.

Many of the otherwise thorough bibliographical studies of these plays are less than thorough about stage directions. Chapter Five, "Editorial Problems," of W. W. Greg's First

Folio, in its summaries of the many theories about each text in the Folio, shows more clearly than other works that such studies have often been written, and theories have often been developed with the tacit exclusion of stage directions. Foul papers, for instance, often include book-keepers' stage directions, but Greg is one of the few bibliographers to mention such directions, and he does not always do so directly. Until much more work has been done on the state and provenance of stage directions, the provenances of texts as offered in most of the following studies must be used with a wary eye. Even in bibliographical studies, it appears, the interest in the Poet often dominates an interest in the mechanics of stage production.

Each listing takes the following form:

TITLE

Date of Composition

Author

Company

Date of Publication

Text used in this study

Stationer's Register entry (if pertinent)

Title Page entry (if pertinent)

Elizabethan Stage or William Shakespeare entry

Later studies (if pertinent)

My comment: as Note

The abbreviations used are the same as those listed in the Preface, with the addition of:

Harbage, Rival Traditions: A. Harbage, Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions; the repertory lists on pages 343-50.

S. D.: Stage Direction

S. R.: Stationer's Register

T. F. T.: Tudor Facsimile Texts, ed. J. S. Farmer

T. P.: Title Page

ALPHONSUS OF ARAGON

- ca. 1587      Greene  
                  Unknown Co. (? Queen's: Greg. ?later Admiral's:  
                  Chambers.)
- 1599      Malone Society, 1926, ed. Greg.  
 T. P.: "As it hath bene sundrie times Acted. Made by R. G."  
E. S., III, 327: Perhaps Admiral's Mahomet, revived 1594 and  
 1601.  
 Greg, Malone ed., vii-viii: Probably prepared for or copied  
 from theatrical text.  
 Greg, First Folio, 137: Notes indefinite authorial S. D.'s.  
 N. J. Sanders, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Birmingham,  
 1957: Includes introduction, commentary, etc.

ALPHONSUS OF GERMANY

- ?1594      Anon. (?Peele. ?with Chapman.)  
                  Unknown Co. (later, 1641 (?1630) King's.)
- 1654      Quarto (1654)  
 S. R. (1653): "by John Poole."  
 T. P.: "As it hath been very often Acted . . . at . . .  
BLACK-FRIERS . . . By George Chapman."  
E. S., IV, 2: Perhaps originally by Peele, later revised.  
 Note: Includes many "descriptive" (probably authorial)  
 S. D.'s--"Enter the Empress Isabella King John's  
Daughter."

I ANTONIO AND MELLIDA

- 1599      Marston  
                  Children of Paul's
- 1602      Malone Society, 1921, ed. Greg.  
 T. P.: "As it hath beene sundry times acted."  
E. S., III, 429.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

- 1607      Shakespeare  
                  King's
- 1623      Folio (1623)  
W. S., I, 476.  
 Greg, Editorial Problem, 147: Careful author's MS.  
 Greg, First Folio, 427: Foul papers carefully prepared for  
 production.

BATTLE OF ALCAZAR

- 1589                Peele  
                    ?Strange's. (Admiral's when published.)
- 1594                Malone Society, 1907, ed. Greg.
- T. P.: "As it was sundrie times plaid by the . . .  
            Admirall['s.]"
- E. S., III, 459.
- Greg, Dramatic Documents, v: The "plot" owned by Admiral's  
in 1598 differs from the published play in some ways.  
[Note: The end of the "plot" MS is destroyed, and no-  
thing in it can be connected with the battles.]
- Greg, Two Elizabethan Stage Abridgements, 15-16: Quarto  
represents a drastically cut-down version prepared  
probably for provinces. Source may be cut prompt book  
or transcript. Much authorial phrasing remains.

BIRTH OF MERLIN

- 1608                Rowley (?with Middleton)  
                    Unknown Co.
- 1662                Quarto (1662)
- T. P.: "As it hath been several times Acted . . . by . . .  
            Shakespeare and . . . Rowley."
- E. S., III, 474: 1608 date one of several theories. Per-  
haps a revision, in 1608, of Uther Pendragon (1597).  
This may be only based on a ca. 1608 play and written,  
with Middleton, after 1621.
- R. C. Bald, "Hengist, King of Kent," by Middleton, xxii:  
Calls this a sequel to Hengist, therefore later than  
1620.
- Harbage, Rival Traditions: Dates this 1609-13.

BLIND BEGGAR OF ALEXANDRIA

- 1596                Chapman  
                    Admiral's
- 1598                Malone, 1928, ed. Greg.
- T. P.: "As . . . sundry times publicly acted."
- E. S., III, 251: Probably a cut stage copy.
- Greg, Malone Edition, vi: S. D.'s might be supplied from  
a memory of a stage performance. If not a surreptitious  
text, it has at least an irregular history.

BONDUCA

- 1613 Fletcher  
King's (at Blackfriar's)
- 1647 Folio (1647)
- MS Malone Society, 1951, ed. Greg.
- E. S., III, 228: Could be either 1609-11 or 1613-14.
- R. C. Bald, Bibliographical Studies, 79: Folio (which has many S. D.'s omitted in the MS) is derived from prompt-copy. S. D.'s were not in the foul copy from which the MS was taken.

BRAZEN AGE

- 1611 Heywood  
Queen Anne's (?with King's)
- 1613 Pearson Ed., Vol. III.
- E. S., III, 345: Silver Age, stated in Epistle to have preceded this, was presented at Court, Jan. 1612.
- E. Schanzer, "Heywood's Ages," 28: This, Golden Age and Silver Age written between end of 1610 and end of 1611. Suggests parallels with Shakespeare.

CAESAR AND POMPEY

- 1605 (II.i written in 1610-11) Chapman  
King's (after 1631)
- 1631 Parrott, Plays and Poems, Vol. I.
- T. P.: (of 3rd issue, 1653) "As . . . Acted at the Black-Fryers."
- E. S., III, 259: Chapman's Epistle says written "long since" and never touched at the stage. Might have been acted by King's after 1631 publication.
- Harbage, Rival Traditions: Lists as King's by 1613.
- J. R. Brown, "Chapman's Caesar and Pompey," 466-8: No evidence of stagekeeper's hand or of performance, but written "in the tradition of the commercial theatre" and should be visualized on its stage.

CAESAR'S REVENGE (CAESAR AND POMPEY)

- 1595 Anon.  
"Students"
- ca. 1606 Malone Society, 1911, ed. F. S. Boas.



(Caesar's Revenge: cont.)

T. P. (1607 re-issue): "Priuately acted by the Students of  
Trinity Colledge in Oxford."  
E. S., IV, 4: Probably written 1592-96.

CAMPASPE

1584 Lyly  
Children of Chapel and of Paul's.  
1584 Malone Society, 1933, ed. Greg.  
T. P.: Played before the Queen.  
E. S., III, 413.

CAPTAIN THOMAS STUKELEY

1596 (?revised 1599) Anon. (?Heywood in part)  
Admiral's  
1605 Quarto (1605)  
T. P.: "As it hath beene Acted."  
E. S., IV, 47: Dates it 1596. There are varying theories  
about this being a combination of two other plays.  
Note: Many S. D.'s read like running commentary, in the  
present tense. One S. D. (L<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>) reads "then they re-  
tired back."

CHRISTIAN TURNED TURK

1610 Daborne  
?King's; ?Queen's Revel's.  
1612 Anglia, XX, 1898, ed. A. E. H. Swaen (checked  
against Quarto (1612).)  
(S. R. and) T. P.: "As it hath beene publickly Acted."  
E. S., III, 271.  
Harbage, Rival Traditions: Listed as King's.  
Note: Generally authorial instructions--"Enter . . . three  
or foure Sailers . . ." (203). S. D. and dialogue call  
for upper stage trap or entries from the yard (230-1).

CORIOLANUS

1608 Shakespeare  
King's  
1623 Folio (1623)

(Coriolanus: cont.)

- W. S., I, 478: S. D.'s are elaborate and give many notes for position, movement, and gesture on the stage. They suggest Shakespeare's hand.
- Greg, Editorial Problem, 148: A careful author's MS.
- Greg, First Folio, 427: Foul papers carefully prepared for production.
- Hinman, First Folio, II, 131: MS copy.
- Irwin Smith, Shakespeare's Blackfriars, 215: Written for Globe, but with an eye to Blackfriars.
- Note: Several S. D.'s (see esp. beginning of I.vii) are exceedingly literary. There are inconsistencies in the use of trumpets and cornets in several places (discussed under Sound Effects, see above, p.255).

CYMBELINE

1609 Shakespeare

King's

1623 Folio (1623)

W. S., I, 484.

Greg, Editorial Problem, 150: Prompt-book based on careful foul papers.

Greg, First Folio, 427: Good deal of foul papers retained; especially (412) in Battle scenes and spectacles.

G. E. Bentley, "Shakespeare and the Blackfriar's Theatre," 38-50; and Irwin Smith, Shakespeare's Blackfriars, 216: Written for Blackfriars.

A. Nicoll, "Shakespeare and the Court Masque," 51-62; and Harbage, Rival Traditions, 86, 351-8: Written for Globe.

DAVID AND BETHSABE (THE LOVE OF KING DAVID AND FAIR BETHSABE)

1587 (71591-4) Peele

Unknown Co.

1599 Malone Society, 1912, ed. Greg.

T. P.: "As it hath ben divers times plaied on the stage."

E. S., III, 461: "Text looks like a boil-down of a piece, perhaps of a new-miracle type."

H. M. Dowling, "Date and Order of Peele's Plays," 165-7: Does not appear to have been written for the common stage: a closet dramatic poem.

(David and Bethsabe: cont.)

- D. Horne, in The Life and Minor Works of George Peele, (ed. C. T. Prouty, 1952), 92; I. Ekeblad, Eng. Stud. (1958); W. Clemen, English Tragedy Before Shakespeare, 173: Date play 1592-4.
- Note: S. D. (line 1367) reads, ". . . he threw at him," perhaps reflective of memorial reconstruction of stage activity. Other S. D.'s are somewhat literary.

DEATH OF ROBERT, EARL OF HUNTINGDON (II ROBIN HOOD)

- 1598 Munday and Chettle  
Admiral's
- 1601 Quarto (1601)  
T. P.: "Acted" by Admiral's servants.  
E. S., III, 447.
- Greg, First Folio, 137: Notes indefinite author's S. D.'s.

DEVIL'S CHARTER

- 1607 Barnaby Barnes  
King's
- 1607 Materialen . . . , 1904, ed. McKerrow.  
T. P.: "As it was plaide before the King's Maiestie . . .  
But more exactly renewed, corrected, and augmented since  
by the Author, for the more pleasure and profit of the  
Reader."
- R. Hosley, "Discovery Place in Shakespeare's Globe," 44:  
Points out theatrical quality of S. D.'s.
- Note: The rather lengthy S. D.'s may be expanded from the original, but read like description of theatrical activity. "Skirmish within" (30) is more theatrical than literary.

DOUBLE MARRIAGE

- 1620 Fletcher and Massinger  
King's
- 1647 Folio (1647)  
J. D. S., III, 329: Notes that Bald thought this prompt-copy.

EDMOND IRONSIDE

- ca. 1595 (?) Anon.  
 Unknown Co. (?a Henslowe property). Later (after 1631-2) probably Prince Charles'.  
 MS Malone Society, 1927, ed. E. Boswell.  
 Note: Arguments for the ca. 1595 date are based on style, and two listings in Henslowe (Foakes and Rickert, 60) of a "hardicute," and a "knewtus." The MS appears to have been prepared for production in the early 30's. No evidence exists to show it was ever presented.

EDWARD THE FIRST

- 1591 Peele  
 Unknown Co. (?Queen's)  
 1593 Malone Society, 1911, ed. Greg.  
E. S., III, 460: Identifies with Longshanks, in Henslowe, played by Admiral's in 1595. Marked 'ne,' it would have been this only if substantially revised.  
 Greg, Malone ed.: Thinks it Longshanks. Probably whole scenes missing.  
 P. Cheffand, George Peele, 88: Dates it 1590-91.  
 Kirschbaum, "A Census of Bad Quartos," 36-8: Bad Quarto.  
 D. J. Ashe, "Text of Peele's Edward I." 157-69: Bad Quarto.  
 Text a non-authorial revision, but using author's original S. D.'s.  
 A. Sampey, "Plot Structure in Peele's Plays . . .," 691-4: Part of confusion stems from Peele's weakness as plotter and organizer.

EDWARD THE SECOND

- 1592 Marlowe  
 Pembroke's  
 1594 Malone Society, 1925, ed. Greg.  
 T. P.: "As it was sundrie times publicquely acted / in . . . London by . . . Pem / brooke['s]."  
 T. P. (1622): "As . . . Acted by the late Queenes Maiesties Seruants at the Red Bull." [Variant T. P.--other 1622, as above. Red Bull variant evidently embodies later information (Greg, Bibliography)].  
E. S., III, 425.

(Edward the Second, cont.)

Harbage, Rival Traditions: Lists as among plays taken over (after 1594) by Chamberlain's men. [Note: in view of the Red Bull appearance, this seems unlikely.]

Note: Includes many descriptive (authorial) S. D.'s.

EDWARD THE THIRD

1590 Anon. (?Marlowe. ?Kyd. ?Greene. ?Shakespeare, perhaps merely in revision).

Unknown Co.

1596 Quarto (1596)

T. P.: "As it hath bin sundrie times plaied about . . . London."

E. S., IV, 9: If any Shakespeare, I.ii and II. Date ca. 1594-5.

G. Lambrechts, "Edward III . . ." 174: Style and versification suggest Kyd.

K. Muir, "A Reconsideration of Edward III," 47: Either by Shakespeare or an author unknown to us. Shakespeare may have been re-writing another's work, doing more in some places than in others.

Greg, First Folio, 176: Descriptive S. D.'s reflect foul papers.

EDWARD THE FOURTH

1599 Heywood (and others. ?Drayton and Chettle) Derby's

1599 Pearson ed., Vol. I.

S. R. (Aug. 28, 1599): "as yt was lately acted."

T. P.: "As it hath diuers times beene publicquely played."

E. S., IV, 10: Generally accepted as unquestionably Heywood, but Chambers has doubts. Drayton's claim is based on a song.

Ribner, English History Play, 273-4: Cites an unpublished M.A. thesis that establishes this as definitely Heywood, between 1594-9.

Note: Includes many authorial instructions--"Jockie is led to whipping ouer the stage, speaking some words, but of no importance." (180)

I FAIR MAID OF THE WEST

- 71610 Heywood  
 ?Anne's. (Henrietta's, in 1631)  
 1631 Pearson ed., Vol. II.  
 T. P.: "As it was lately acted before the King and Queen."  
J. C. S., IV, 568: Notes that A. M. Clark (in 1910) suggested 1610, but Bentley inclined to before 1603. Cast published with play dates to ca. 1630.  
 Note: Some possible signs of prompt-book notations--  
 "Hoboyes long" (312); "Act long" (320); and esp. at p. 296 where S. D. calls for "shot," but the dialogue ignores the sound, and learns of arrival of ship by messenger. S. D.'s in general are short, direct, and simple.

FAMOUS VICTORIES OF HENRY THE FIFTH

- 1586 Anon. (?Tarlton. ?S. Rowley)  
 Queen Elizabeth's  
 1598 Quarto (1598)  
 T. P.: "As it was plaide by the Queenes Maiesties Players."  
 T. P. (another issue of the same sheets, 1617): "As it was Acted by the Kinges Maiesties Seruants."  
E. S., IV, 17.  
 Kirschbaum, "A Census of Bad Quartos," 33: Bad Quarto, probably actors' memorial reconstruction.  
 F. P. Wilson, Marlowe and the Early Shakespeare, 94: Dates this before 1588.

FORTUNE BY LAND AND SEA

- 71609 Heywood and Rowley  
 Queen Anne's (or Queen Henrietta's)  
 1655 Pearson ed., Vol. VI.  
 T. P.: "As it was Acted . . . by the Queens Servants."  
E. S., III, 343: Date based largely on Rowley, who wrote for Queen Anne's in 1607-9.  
J. C. S., I, 253: T. P. reference may be to Henrietta.  
 Note: Many authorial instructions--"Enter . . . wel habited" (424); "Mariners. all furnisht with Sea devices fitting for a fight." (416).

FOUR PRENTICES OF LONDON

- 1600 Heywood  
Admiral's (Queen's at Red Bull ca. 1615)
- 1615 Pearson ed., Vol. II.
- T. P.: "As it hath bene diuerse times Acted, at the Red Bull."
- E. S., III, 340: Epistle (which refers to this as written "fifteene or sixteene yeares agoe"), may date to 1610, which would date play near the 1594 S. R. entry. Other evidence suggests an earlier, lost, edition.
- Parrott and Ball, Short View . . . , 116: Probably 1594.
- Note: Many authorial instructions--"Sound a Drumme within softly;" "apart to himselfe."

GEORGE A GREENE

- 1590 ?Greene  
Sussex' (in 1593)
- 1599 Malone Society, 1911, ed. F. W. Clarke.
- T. P.: "As it was sundry times acted."
- E. S., IV, 14: Generally accepted as Greene, but may merely be about an episode in his life.
- Kirschbaum, "A Census of Bad Quartos," 40-42: Memorial reconstruction.
- Note: Includes a few descriptive S. D.'s--"Enter . . . Bettris his daughter" (B<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>).

GOLDEN AGE

- 1610 Heywood  
Queen Anne's
- 1611 Pearson ed., Vol. III.
- T. P.: "As it hath beene sundry times acted at the Red Bull."
- E. S., III, 344:
- Boas, Thomas Heywood, 83: Notes and agrees with Holaday (JEGP, Oct. 1946) that all the Ages are revisions of Admiral's plays.
- Reynolds, Red Bull, 9-11: Convinced that all the Ages were performed and that stage directions reflect theatrical presentation.
- Note: S. D.'s appear authorial, but are not (as are many of Heywood's S. D.'s in other plays) strongly instructional.

GUY, EARL OF WARWICK

1593                7Day and Dekker  
                    Unknown Co.

1661                Quarto (1661)

S. R. (1619/20): ". . . A play called the life and death of  
Guy of Warwicke, by John Day and Tho: Decker."

T. P.: "Written by B. J. . . . Acted very frequently . . .  
by [King's]."

J. C. S., V, 1347: A Guy of Warwick was noted as seen in  
1618, played by Derby's men. It, the S. R. entry, the  
1661 Quarto, may all be different works. Certainly not  
Ben Jonson, probably not Day and Dekker, probably never  
King's men. Probably Elizabethan or early Jacobean.

HECTOR OF GERMANY

1614                W. Smith  
                    "Tradesmen" at Red Bull

1615                Quarto (1615)

T. P.: "As it hath beene publikely Acted at the Red Bull,  
and at the Curtayne, by a Company of Young Men of this  
Citie . . . with new Additions."

E. S., III, 493.

Note: S. D.'s are authorial instructions--"Charge vpon them,  
and the Bastard taken prisoner on the stage . . ."

HENRY THE FOURTH, PART ONE

1597-8             Shakespeare  
                    Chamberlain's

1598                Variorum ed., 1936, ed. Hemingway; Quarto (1598).

W. S., I, 375.

G. B. Evans, Supplement to . . . Variorum (1956), 45-9:

General consensus is that quarto derives from author's  
hand; Folio is "edited" from a fifth edition of Quarto.

C. Hinman, First Folio, II, 75: Folio from Q5.

HENRY THE FOURTH, PART TWO

1597-8             Shakespeare  
                    Chamberlain's

1600                Quarto (1600); Folio (1623)

T. P.: "As it hath been sundrie times publikely acted."

W. S., I, 377.



(Henry the Fourth, Part II: cont.)

- Greg, Editorial Problem, 114-17: Quarto from foul papers marked with cuts for publication; Folio from an edited playhouse MS.
- M. A. Shaaber, "The Folio Text of 2 Henry IV," 134-44: Folio could not be (as suggested by Walker and Bowers) from a corrected Quarto.
- Greg, First Folio, 426, 467: Folio from Quarto collated with prompt-book. Rejects Walker-Bowers postulate of an intermediate transcript. One Quarto S. D. (IV.iii.1) probably added by book-keeper.
- H. Craig, "Revised Elizabethan Quartos," 43: Parts One and Two are revised expansions of an earlier one-part play. [He does not touch upon any possible relationship of this one-part play to Dering's MS.].
- J. G. McManaway, "Textual Studies . . .," 154: Cites varying dismissal of Walker's textual theories.
- Hinman, First Folio, II, 89: Folio from Quarto (1600).

HENRY THE FIFTH

- 1599                    Shakespeare  
                         Chamberlain's
- 1600, 1623            Quarto (1600); Folio (1623).
- T. P. (Quarto): "As it hath bene sundry times playd."  
W. S., I, 388.
- Greg, Editorial Problem, 68-70: Folio may derive from author's MS. Quarto is reported text deriving from same source as Folio.
- Greg, First Folio, 426: Folio from foul papers with sound cues possibly added by book-keeper.
- Bowers, On Editing Shakespeare, 116: Cites Cairncross in SB (1956) as demonstrating that Folio is not from foul papers, but from annotated Q3 with a few leaves of Q2 and some slips of MS.
- Hinman: First Folio, II, 14: Folio from MS copy.
- W. D. Smith, "The Henry V Choruses . . .," 57: Chorus' speeches added for a 1600-1603 court production. The "apologies" are applicable to court conditions only.
- R. A. Law, "The Choruses in Henry the Fifth," 13: Disagrees with Smith (above): thinks Chorus is not apologizing, but exalting the theme.

HENRY THE SIXTH, PART ONE

1591-2 (?1590) Shakespeare

?Strange's. ?Pembroke's.

1623 Folio (1623)

W. S., I, 289.

Greg, Editorial Problem, 138-9: General consensus is multiple authorship with authorial MS used as prompt copy. "We seem to come nearer to Wilson's 'continuous copy' in this than in any other play." Revision perhaps to fit it to parts II and III.

C. Leech, "The Two-Part Play . . . .," 90: Revision of an earlier play, revised to fit II and III.

L. Kirschbaum, "The Authorship of I Henry VI," 809; E. M. W. Tillyard, Shakespeare's History Plays, 161; P. Alexander, Shakespeare's Life and Art, 79; H. Spencer, The Art and Life of William Shakespeare, 153-55; A. S. Cairncross, Arden edition, xxxvii: All consider the play to be entirely by Shakespeare.

J. D. Wilson, Cambridge edition, 103: Shakespeare, Peele, and Nashe. The copy for the Folio could never have been used for a prompt-book.

Cairncross, Arden Ed., xxvi: Transcript of author's MS, with annotations by stage adaptor or prompter, perhaps "improved" in a way not permissible in Shakespeare's time; xv: S. D.'s mainly authorial; xviii: and inconsistent; xxxviii: Date 1590; xxxvi: Pembroke's.

Hinman, First Folio, II, 115: MS copy for all three parts.

HENRY THE SIXTH, PART TWO

1591 Shakespeare

?Pembroke's in 1593. (?Strange's)

1594, 1623 Quarto (1594); Folio (1623).

W. S., I, 277.

Greg, Editorial Problem, 52-55: Quarto from a report, probably by actors. Folio probably an early author's MS, perhaps with added S. D.'s, used as prompt-copy.

Greg, First Folio, 426: Folio from authorial fair copy used as prompt-book and later revised with reference to Quarto.

M. Doran, Henry VI, Parts II and III: Their Relationship to the 'Contention' and the 'True Tragedy'; and P. Alexander, Shakespeare's Henry VI and Richard III: Establish the generally accepted theory (but see below) that The Contention and The True Tragedy are bad quartos of Henry VI, parts II and III respectively.

(Henry the Sixth, Part Two; cont.)

- Cairncross, Arden edition: Surveys developments since Alexander and Doran; accepts Bad Quarto theory, but states that stage directions in the Folio are directly from the Quarto, not from prompt-copy.
- Cairncross, "Pembroke's Men . . .," 335: Memorial reconstruction put together by Pembroke's men in summer of 1593. At the same time, the company made memorial reconstructions of Part III, Richard III (Q1597) and Romeo and Juliet (Q1597).
- A. Feuillerat, The Composition of Shakespeare's Plays, 83-141; and C. T. Prouty, The Contention and 2 Henry VI: Both contend that the theory (originally Malone's) that Contention and True Tragedy are pre-Shakespearian source plays is correct.

HENRY THE SIXTH, PART THREE

- 1591                      Shakespeare  
                            ?Pembroke's in 1593. (?Strange's)
- 1595, 1623              Octavo (1595); Folio (1623).  
W. S., I, 277.
- Note: See many of the entries listed for Part II.
- Greg, Editorial Problem, 52-55: Octavo from actors' report. Folio from author's MS (as part II).
- Cairncross, Arden Edition, xxxiii: Folio based (through a transcript) on Shakespeare's MS as annotated by the prompter and slightly altered ca. 1596-7 (xv: primarily in the dialogue) for various reasons of casting, censorship, and historical accuracy. xxxi: S. D.'s in Folio influenced by the memorial S. D.'s in the third quarto (Q collated with F copy in print-shop). Q3 used as part copy for Folio. xlviii: Date, 1591; whole trilogy 1590 to mid-1591.
- M. Mincoff, "Henry VI, Part III and The True Tragedy," 288: A rebuttal to Feuillerat and Prouty (see above): Quarto a corrupt following of Folio copy or a lost original. Folio copy Shakespeare's original.
- R. Hosley, "More About 'Tents' on Bosworth Field," 459: A 'literary' tent in IV.iii S.D.
- Note: Actor's names in Folio show its source to date (at least in part) before mid-1598 (Death of G. Spenser).

HISTRIO-MASTIX

- 1599 Anon., revised by Marston. (? Orig. Chapman)  
 Paul's Boys
- 1610 Plays of John Marston, III, ed. H. H. Wood.  
E. S., IV, 17: Marston probably reviser of earlier play in  
 about 1599. Earlier version may be 1596 or as early  
 as 1587.
- Note: Includes many authorial instructions.

HOFFMAN

- 1602 Chettle  
 Admiral's
- 1631 Malone Society, 1950 (1951), ed. H. Jenkins.  
 T. P.: "As it hath bin diuers times acted . . . at the  
 Phenix."
- E. S., III, 264.  
 Greg, First Folio, 137: Notes indefinite, authorial, S. D.'s.

HORESTES

- 1567 Pikering  
 Rich's or Boys, at Court (?)
- 1567 T. F. T., 1910.  
 T. P.: "The names deuised for VI. to playe" [but see text,  
 p. 336].
- E. S., III, 466.  
 Harbage, Rival Traditions; and Bevington, Mankind to Marlowe,  
 61: Rich's men.
- Note: S. D.'s are instructions to performers.

HUMOR OUT OF BREATH

- 1608 Day  
 King's Revels'
- 1608 Quarto (1608).  
 T. P.: "Diuers times latelie acted . . ."
- E. S., III, 287.

IF IT BE NOT GOOD THE DEVIL IS IN IT

- 1610 Dekker (?with Daborne)  
Queen Anne's
- 1612 Pearson Ed., III.
- T. P.: "A New Play, AS IT HATH BIN lately Acted . . . At  
the Red Bull."
- E. S., III, 297.
- Bowers, Dramatic Works of Dekker, III, 115-16: Probably  
autograph MS with some theatrical additions; either  
foul papers prepared for transcription to prompt book  
or a rough author's MS serving as a prompt book.

IF YOU KNOW NOT ME YOU KNOW NOBODY, PART TWO

- 1605 Heywood  
Queen Anne's
- 1606 Pearson Ed., Vol. I.  
E. S., III, 342.
- M. Doran, Malone Ed. (1934), xvii-xix: Product of theatre  
MS modified by publisher. Heywood's Prologue claims  
stenographic theft.
- G. F. Reynolds, Red Bull, 33-34: S. D.'s are memorial  
reconstruction of performance. Staged at either Curtain  
or Red Bull.

IRON AGE, PARTS ONE AND TWO

- 1612 Heywood  
Queen Anne's (? and King's)
- 1632 Pearson Ed., Vol. III.
- E. S., III, 345: Performed "by two companies" at once, at  
Curtain, Red Bull, and Cockpit.
- Note: Many authorial S. D.'s (302, 356). Many S. D.'s are  
so spectacular as to seem impractical on the contem-  
porary stage as we envision it, and are so rarely  
reflected in the dialogue that they seem almost Bernard  
Shaw-like interpolations for the reader.

JAMES THE FOURTH (THE SCOTTISH HISTORY)

- 1590 Greene  
?Queen Elizabeth's
- 1598 Malone Society, 1921, ed. Swaen.

(James the Fourth: cont.)

T. P.: "As it hath bene sundrie times publikely plaide."  
E. S., III, 330.

Greg, First Folio, 137: Notes indefinite authorial S. D.'s.  
 Harbage, Rival Traditions: Queen Elizabeth's.  
 Clemen, English Tragedy, 186: Cites J. C. Maxwell (MLR,  
 XLIV) and W. F. McNeir (MLN, LXII) as basis for a  
 date before 1592.

JERONIMO, PART ONE

1604 Anon.  
 ?King's (?Revels' Boys)  
 1605 Works of . . . Kyd, Ed. Boas.  
E. S., IV, 22: Possibility that this was pirated from  
 King's men by Revels.  
 Harbage, Rival Traditions: Strange's and Admiral's, 1583-94.

JOHN OF BORDEAUX

1592 ?Greene (?Chettle--probably revisor rather  
 than collaborator).  
 ?Strange's  
 MS Malone Society, 1935 (1936), Ed. W. L. Renwick.  
 Greg, First Folio, 163: Scribal prompt-book(?) of a play  
 by Greene(?), annotated by book-keeper, and with one  
 speech supplied in Chettle's autograph. ca. 1590-  
 1600.  
 W. L. Renwick, Malone Ed., v-xiv: Shortened version of a  
 longer text, probably by Greene. Handwriting connec-  
 tions with Ed. Ironside, Two Noble Ladies, Woodstock,  
 and perhaps "Plot" of Battle of Alcazar. Early in the  
 1590-94 period.  
 Harbage, Rival Traditions: Company unknown.

JULIUS CAESAR

1599 Shakespeare  
 Chamberlain's  
 1623 Folio (1623)  
W. S., I, 396.

(Julius Caesar: cont.)

- Greg, Editorial Problem, 143: From the prompt-book.  
 Greg, First Folio, 427: From transcript of the prompt book,  
 which may have been author's fair copy.  
 Hinman, First Folio, I, 131: MS copy.

KING JOHN

- 1596                    Shakespeare  
                       Chamberlain's  
 1623                    Folio (1623)  
W. S., I, 364: Troublesome Reign the direct source. Date,  
 1596-7.  
 Greg, Editorial Problem, 142: General consensus is that  
 Folio was printed from prompt-book or transcript of one,  
 but Greg thinks S. D.'s reflect author. Suggests foul  
 papers annotated by book-keeper. Notes that Alice  
 Walker suggests I.-III. from foul papers and IV.-V.  
 from prompt-copy.  
 Hinman, First Folio, II, 473: MS copy.  
 J. D. Wilson, Cambridge Ed., vii: Before 1594.  
 E. A. J. Honigmann, Arden Ed., xix: 1590-91.  
 I. Ribner, English History Play, 124: ca. 1592-3.

[TROUBLESOME REIGN OF] KING JOHN

- 1588                    ?Peele  
                       Queen Elizabeth's  
 1591                    Pt. I, Q(1591); Pt. II, T. F. T., 1911.  
 T. P.: "As it was (sundry times) publikey acted by . . .  
Queenes . . . in . . . London."  
E. S., IV, 23: Various arguments for various authors.  
W. S., I, 364: Some strengths in arguments for Peele.  
 J. D. Wilson, Cambridge Ed., King John, xx; and H. D. Sykes,  
Sidelights on Elizabethan Drama, 89: Both suggest Peele.  
 I. Ribner, English History Play, 81: Surveying the field,  
 notes that most writers incline to Peele, but doubtful.  
 E. A. J. Honigmann, Arden Ed., King John, 174-6: Suggests  
 Rowley, perhaps with Munday. Thinks this edition a bad  
 quarto.  
 E. M. W. Tillyard, Shakespeare's History Plays, 217-18: This  
 a bad quarto of an earlier Shakespeare version.  
 Note: Includes several instructional S. D.'s--"Enter . . .  
and then crie God saue the King."

KNIGHT OF MALTA

1618 Fletcher, Massinger, Field  
King's  
1647 Folio (1647)  
J. C. S., III, 351: Prompt-copy.

KING LEAR

1605 Shakespeare  
King's  
1608, 1623 Quarto (1608); Folio (1623).  
T. P. (Quarto): "As it was played before the King . . . at Whitehall."  
W. S., I, 463: Quarto a reported text; Folio a stage copy. F omits many Q notes for properties and action, and adds a few together with many noises.  
Greg, Editorial Problem, 88, d-e: Rejects theories that Quarto is from corrected and revised foul papers. Concludes that Quarto is from a report (not stenographic) of a performance of a somewhat cut version. [Note: Cut version perhaps as played at Whitehall?] Folio from Quarto corrected by comparison with prompt-book which was differently cut and slightly simplified for acting.  
Greg, First Folio, 427: Quarto from a careless transcript of foul papers memorially contaminated. Notes "most widely current" theory, based on Duthie's 1949 edition, that Quarto is actor's reconstruction in temporary absence of prompt-book: Greg finds many serious difficulties in this theory. The S. D.'s in Folio (book-keeper's) owe nothing in form to the Quarto.

KING LEIR

1590 Anon.  
Elizabeth's (or Sussex')  
1605 Malone Society, 1907, ed. Greg.  
S. R.: "as it was latelie acted." (in 1605).  
T. P.: "As it hath bene diuers and sundry times lately acted."  
E. S., IV, 25: Revived at Rose in 1594. "latelie acted" unlikely.  
W. S., I, 469: "latelie acted" probable, in slightly different version than printed.



(King Lear: cont.)

Note: S. D.'s occasionally read as theatrically oriented authorial instructions--"and some halfe naked," "Mumford must chase Cambria away." If Chambers' W. S. suggestion is valid, the text may derive from foul papers of a pre-performance version of the play.

### LARUM FOR LONDON

- 1599 Anon.  
Chamberlain's
- 1602 Malone Society, 1913, ed. Greg.  
T. P.: "As it hath been playde by . . . [Chamberlain's men]."  
E. S., IV, 1.  
Greg, Malone Ed.: Produced 1594-1600.  
Note: Includes many S. D.'s for sounds. Many S. D.'s in the present tense, almost as if recorded as the action progressed. One (lines 796-8) is in past tense: "A company of rascal soldiers came heere . . ." A few instructional S. D.'s: "Hoise him vp and let him downe againe" (1007), "Throw stones." (1329)

### LOCRINE

- 1591 Anon. (?Peele. ?Greene.)  
Unknown
- 1595 Malone Society, 1908, ed. McKerrow.  
T. P.: "Newly set foorth, ouerseene and corrected, / By W. S."  
E. S., IV, 26: Appears as by Shakespeare in 1664 Folio.  
Perhaps he had hand in revision. Notes Collier claim for Charles Tylney with dumb-shows by George Buck.  
"Whoever the author . . . [a] university wit." As it stands, related to Selimus.  
W. S., I, 536: Notes Greg's acceptance of the Tylney-Buck authorship, putting play before 1586.  
Clemen, English Tragedy, 92: Includes bibliography of claimants for early dating.  
B. Maxwell, Studies in the Shakespeare Apocrypha, 22: As this stands, no earlier than 1591, revised by Greene.  
Greg, First Folio, 137: Notes indefinite authorial S. D.'s.

LOVESICK KING

- 1617 A. Brewer  
Unknown Co.
- 1655 Materialen, 1907, ed. Swaen.
- E. S., III, 237: Date of 1607 established by a borrowing from Knight of the Burning Pestle. [Note: But date of K. E. P. doubtful--it may be as late as 1610.]
- J. C. S., II, 388: Indebted to Edmond Ironside. A date as late as 1617 is without evidence.
- J. C. S., III, 43: Possibly written for a visit of James to Newcastle either (on available evidence) 1603 or 1617. Latter unlikely, but better than former. S. D.'s make it probable that this was written by an actor.

LUST'S DOMINION

- 1600 Day, Dekker, Haughton (?Marston)  
?Admiral's
- 1657 Duodecimo (1661)
- T. P. (?2nd issue): "Written by Christopher Marloe."
- E. S., III, 427: Conceivable that a play in which Marlowe had a hand underlies this.
- Harbage, Rival Traditions: Company unknown.
- Bowers, Dramatic Works of Dekker, IV, 117-28: Probably non-theatrical MS in more than one hand (foul-papers of three authors?), or a revision, or a combination of both.
- K. G. Cross, "Authorship of . . .," 39-61: T. P. attribution to Marlowe is confusion for Marston, for whom he finds stylistic and linguistic evidence.

MACBETH

- 1606 Shakespeare  
King's
- 1623 Folio (1623)
- W. S., I, 471: From a prompt-copy. Appears to be a revision or cutting of a longer work. "There seems also to have been some manipulation of the rather scrappy final battle-scene."
- H. N. Paul, The Royal Play of Macbeth, 254: Written for a particular occasion at court, summer, 1606.
- J. D. Wilson, Cambridge Ed., 87-91: Transcript of prompt book. Double S. D. entry (V.vii.34) reflects alternate ending for shortened version.

(Macbeth: cont.)

Greg, First Folio, 391-96: No evidence of longer version, or for original performance at court. Admits cutting or revision of "bleeding captain" sequence.

### MASSACRE AT PARIS

1593 Marlowe  
Strange's  
?1594 Malone Society, 1929, ed. Greg.  
T. P.: "As it was plaide by the . . . Admirall['s].  
E. S., III, 425.  
Kirschbaum, "A Census of Bad Quartos," 30: Bad Quarto.  
One "good" MS page exists (see J. Q. Adams, The Library, XIV, March, 1934, 447-69).  
Greg, Malone Ed., ix: S. D.'s from witness of performance.  
I. Ribner, Complete Plays, 423: Probably memorial reconstruction.

### OLDCASTLE

See Sir John Oldcastle.

### ORLANDO FURIOSO

1591 Greene (?and Rowley)  
Strange's and Queen's  
1594 Malone Society, 1906, ed. Greg.  
E. S., III, 329.  
Kirschbaum, "Census of Bad Quartos," 29: Memorial Reconstruction.  
Greg, Two Elizabethan Stage Abridgements, 351-55: Text as performed by company in smaller and poorer state, after original had been lost or sold.

### RAPE OF LUCRECE

1607 Heywood  
Queen Anne's  
1608 Pearson Ed., Vol. V.; Quarto (1638)  
E. S., III, 343.

(Rape of Lucrece: cont.)

A. Holaday, Thomas Heywood's "The Rape of Lucrece," 4-19:  
Text based on author's MS of a 1607 revision of a 1594 play.

Note: Includes many instructional S. D.'s.

REIGN OF KING RICHARD THE SECOND, PART ONE: or THOMAS OF WOODSTOCK

See Woodstock.

REVENGE OF BUSSY D'AMBOIS

1610 Chapman  
Queen's Revels'  
1613 Plays and Poems, I, 1910, ed. Parrott  
T. P.: "As it hath beene often presented at . . . White-  
Fryers."  
E. S., III, 258.

RICHARD THE THIRD

1593 Shakespeare  
?Strange's. ?Pembroke's.  
1597, 1623 Quarto (1597); Folio (1623).  
T. P. (Quarto): "As it hath beene lately Acted by [Chamber-  
lain's Men]."  
W. S., I, 294: Folio represents original text; Quarto either  
a stage revision or a corrupt report of stage version.  
Folio set from Q6, imperfectly corrected from author's  
original.  
Greg, Editorial Problem, 77: Quarto memorial reconstruction  
for the stage, perhaps in absence of prompt-book. Folio  
from Q6 corrected by MS (perhaps author's copy imper-  
fectly corrected and used as prompt-book).  
Greg, First Folio, 426: Communal reconstruction for Quarto  
made for provincial prompt-book.  
C. Hinman, First Folio, II, 115: Folio set from Q3 (1602).  
A. S. Cairncross, "Pembroke's Men . . .," 355: Memorial  
reconstruction made by Pembroke's men in 1593.  
Harbage, Rival Traditions: Listed as Sussex and Pembroke's.

(Richard the Third: cont.)

- E. A. J. Honigmann, "Shakespeare's Lost Source Plays," 305:  
 Dates this prior to True Tragedy Richard III, which he  
 calls bad quarto of this.
- R. Fusillo, "Tents on Bosworth Field," 193: Literary S. D.'s  
 in Folio, V.iii (see Hosley entry: 3 Henry VI).

ROBIN HOOD, PART TWO

See Death of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon.

SELIMUS

- 1592               ?Greene  
                   Queen Elizabeth's
- 1594               Malone Society, 1908, ed. W. Bang.  
 T. P.: "As it was playd . . ."  
 E. S., IV, 46: Evidence quite strong for Greene.  
 Ribner, "Greene's Attack on Marlowe . . .," 162: Greene's  
 last play. Dates it 1590.  
 B. Maxwell, Studies in the Shakespeare Apocrypha, 22-71:  
 Greene sole author.
- Note: Includes authorial instructions--"Acomat must read  
 a letter, and then renting it say:"

SEVEN DEADLY SINS

- 1585 (-8)       ?Richard Tarlton  
                   Unknown Co. (Strange's ca. 1590).  
 MS ("Plot") Dramatic Documents, I, 1931, ed. Greg.  
 E. S., III, 496.  
 Greg, Dramatic Documents, II, 114-120.

SHOEMAKER A GENTLEMAN

- 1608               Rowley  
                   ?Queen Anne's
- 1638               Quarto (1638)  
 T. P.: "As it hath beene sundry Times Acted at the Red Bull  
 and other Theates."  
 E. S., III, 473.  
 S. Wells, "Some Stage Directions . . .:" Suggests evidence  
 of prompter's entries.

SILVER AGE

- 1611 Heywood  
Queen's and King's
- 1613 Pearson Ed., Vol. III.  
E. S., III, 334: Presented by the combined companies at court, January, 1612.
- Harbage, Rival Traditions: Property of Queen's men.  
Note: S. D.'s in dumb-shows are quite literary.

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE

- 1599 Drayton, Hathway, Munday, Wilson  
Admiral's
- 1600 Malone Society, 1908, ed. P. Simpson.  
T. P.: "As it hath been lately acted."  
E. S., III, 306.
- Note: Includes authorial S. D.'s--"Prepared in some filthy order for warre."

SIR THOMAS WYATT

- 1604 Dekker and Webster (?and Chettle, Heywood, Smith)  
Queen Anne's
- 1607 Dramatic Works of Dekker, I, ed. Bowers.  
T. P.: "As it was played by the Queens Maiesties Seruants."  
E. S., III, 293: Dates this 1602. Connects in some way with I and II Lady Jane (1602)--Worcester's men.
- W. L. Halstead, "Note on the Text of . . . Wyatt," 585:  
Actor's version of Lady Jane, shortened for provinces.
- L. Kirschbaum, "A Census of Bad Quartos," 33-35: Bad Quarto.  
Bowers, Dramatic Works, I, 399: Corrupt memorial reconstruction. Company unknown.
- Harbage, Rival Traditions: Queen Anne's.

SOLIMAN AND PERSEDA

- 1590 Anon. (?Kyd)  
Unknown Co.
- n.d. (ca.1592) Quarto (S. T. C. 22894)  
E. S., IV, 46.
- A. Freeman, "Shakespeare and Solymán and Perseda," 481:  
Pre-dates King John (1591-2). Parallels with Spanish Tragedy suggest Kyd.

(Soliman and Perseda: cont.)

Note: S. D.'s seem to be authorial instructions--"Then he takes vp a paper, and reedes in it as followeth." Several S. D.'s are in past tense (reported?)--"Eras-tus pointed to her chaine, and then she said" (Quoted in Boas, Kyd, 190); "Then he deliuered her the chaine" (193). At one point (p. 176-77) S. D.'s call for an entrance on a mule, followed by a dismount, remount, and ride to the door.

### SOPHONISBA

See Wonder of Women.

### TAMBURLAINE, PARTS ONE AND TWO

I, 1587; II, 1588 Marlowe  
Unknown Co. (Admiral's by 1590)  
1590 Works of . . . Marlowe, 1910, ed. C.F.T. Brooke.  
T. P.: "as they were sundrie times shewed vpon Stages in  
    . . . London."  
E. S., III, 421: Preface to 1590 edition states that printer  
has omitted "some fond and frivolous gestures."  
I. Ribner, Complete Plays, xxi: Both parts written 1587.  
Part I perhaps begun at Cambridge and finished in  
London.  
Note: The S. D.'s in the plays are often phrased in terms  
not used in other plays, and the frequency of standard  
terms increases at the end. May suggest a beginning  
playwright unfamiliar with professional terms at first.

### THRACIAN WONDER

1599 Anon.  
Unknown Co.  
1661 Quarto (1661)  
T. P.: "As it hath been several times Acted . . . by . . .  
    Webster and . . . Rowley."  
E. S., IV, 49: Webster and Rowley generally rejected.

THREE LADIES OF LONDON

- 1581 Robert Wilson  
       ?Dudley-Leicester's  
 1584 T. F. T., 1911  
 T. P.: "as it hath been publiquely played."  
E. S., III, 515.  
 Harbage, Rival Traditions: Listed as Dudley-Leicester's.

THREE LORDS AND THREE LADIES OF LONDON

- 1588 Robert Wilson  
       ?Queen's  
 1590 T. F. T., 1912  
E. S., III, 515.

TRAVELS OF THE THREE ENGLISH BROTHERS

- 1607 Day, Wilkins, Rowley  
       Queen Anne's  
 1607 Quarto (1607)  
 S. R.: "as yt was played at the Curten."  
 T. P.: "As it is now play'd by [Queen's men]."  
E. S., III, 286.

TRIAL OF CHIVALRY

- 1601 Anon. (?Heywood. ?Chettle)  
       T. F. T., 1912.  
 1605 Derby's  
 T. P.: "As it hath bin lately acted . . ."  
E. S., IV, 50.

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

- 1599 Shakespeare  
       Chamberlain's  
 1609, 1623 Quarto (1609); Folio (1623).  
 T. P. (Quarto): "As it was acted."  
W. S., I, 438: Quarto and Folio represent same text. F set  
       from a Q corrected from an MS (author's foul papers).  
       Q printed from a transcript.



(Troilus and Cressida: cont.)

- P. Alexander, "Troilus and Cressida, 1609," 267: Written for production at Inns of Court.
- Greg, Editorial Problem, 111: Quarto from a private transcript of foul papers tidied up but deficient in S. D.'s. Folio from Q corrected with perhaps foul papers, or more probably a poor transcript of them. Probably no prompt-book, and foul papers served.
- Greg, First Folio, 344: Additional S. D.'s in Folio suggest preparation for performance.
- A. Walker, Cambridge Ed., 133: Folio printed from a corrected copy of Quarto.
- Shaaber, "The Folio Text of 2 Henry IV," 134-44; and H. Craig, A New Look at Shakespeare Quartos: The likelihood and feasibility of a corrected Quarto is nil.
- McManaway, "Textual Studies" (Shake. Surv. XII), 147: Sums up Folio as follows: Q used for I.i.-I.ii.235. From there on Q corrected by reference to foul papers, perhaps by Shakespeare (Sisson, Alexander, Greg--the latter thinks he made changes as he transcribed), or by scribe (Walker, Chambers).

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA--PLOT

- 1599 Chettle, Dekker  
Admiral's
- MS Dramatic Documents, I, 1931, ed. Greg.
- E. S., IV, 51.

TROUBLESOME REIGN OF KING JOHN

See King John (Troublesome Reign)

TRUE TRAGEDY OF RICHARD III

- 1591 Anon.  
Queen Elizabeth's
- 1594 Malone Society, 1929, Greg.
- T. P.: "As it was playd by the Queenes . . . Players."
- E. S., IV, 43: Little trace of any use by Shakespeare.

(True Tragedy of Richard III: cont.)

W. S., I, 304: Text so bad as to make any guess hazardous. Seems to be reported text: reporter may have been influenced by reminiscences of Shakespeare's Richard III.

J. D. Wilson, "Shakespeare's Richard III and The True Tragedy of Richard the Third, 1594," 299: A reported text of a 1588 play. Shakespeare must have borrowed from this or from the old play it represents (p. 306).

TWO NOBLE KINSMEN

1613 Shakespeare and Fletcher (? and Beaumont)  
King's

1634 Quarto (1634)

T. P.: "Presented at the Black-friers."

E. S., III, 226.

W. S., I, 528: Prompt-copy, with actor's names ca. 1625-26.

Greg, Editorial Problem, 152: MS may have only been made into prompt-copy for a ca. 1625 revival. Includes book-keeper's 'warning' notes.

Bentley, "Shakespeare and the Blackfriars," 38-50: Probably written for the Blackfriar's Theatre. (See Cymbeline entry).

Harbage, Rival Traditions, 86, 351-58; Nicoll, "Shakespeare and the Court Masque," 51-62: Written for the Globe (see Cymbeline entry).

VALIANT WELSHMAN

1612 R. A.  
Prince Henry's (later Palsgrave's)

1615 T. F. T., 1913

T. P.: "As it hath beene sundry times Acted."

E. S., IV, 51: Evidence for Robert Armin mere guess.

B. Lloyd, "The Authorship of The Valiant Welshman," 425-27: Suggests Robert Anton, author of two other plays ca. 1613 and 1616.

WARNING FOR FAIR WOMEN

1599 Anon. (T. Heywood)  
Chamberlain's

1599 Quarto (1599)

T. P.: "As it hath been . . . acted."

E. S., IV, 52.

WEAKEST GOETH TO THE WALL

- 1600 Anon. (?Dekker, in part)  
Oxford's men  
1600 Malone Society, 1913, ed. Greg.  
T. P.: "As it hath bene sundry times plaide."  
E. S., IV, 52.  
Note: S. D.'s quite literary.

WHORE OF BABYLON

- 1606 Dekker  
Prince Henry's  
1607 Pearson Ed. (Dekker), II.  
T. P.: "As it was Acted."  
E. S., III, 296: Epistle and Prologue have clear references  
to production at the Fortune.  
Bowers, Dramatic Works, II, 493-584: Dekker's MS.  
I. Ribner, English History Play, 285: Cites unpublished  
thesis (1953) which dates this 1606.

WONDER OF WOMEN of SOPHONISEA

- 1605 Marston  
Queen's Revels' (at Blackfriars)  
1606 Plays . . . , II, 1938, ed. H. H. Wood.  
T. P.: "as it hath beene sundry times Acted at the Blacke  
Friers."  
E. S., III, 433: May have been taken over from Paul's.

WOODSTOCK

- ca. 1592 Anon.  
Unknown Co. (?later Chamberlain's)  
MS Malone Society, 1929, ed. W. P. Frijlinck  
E. S., IV, 42: "Natural" to have become a Chamberlain's  
play. Boas thinks MS reflects 17th century revival.  
Frijlinck, Malone Ed., xxiv: Heavily used prompt-copy.  
Greg thinks probably Pembroke's.  
A. P. Rossiter, Woodstock, 172: Many S. D.'s added in  
other hands. Total of 9 hands and 11 inks. Dates  
it ca. 1591-4.

WOUNDS OF CIVIL WAR

1588

Lodge

Admiral's (by 1594)

1594

Quarto (1594); Malone Society, 1910, ed.

J. D. Wilson.

T. P.: "As it hath beene publiquely plaide in London by . . .  
Admirall['s].

E. S., III, 410.

Note: S. D.'s are authorial instructions: "Then let enter  
three or foure souldiers" (334-35).

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